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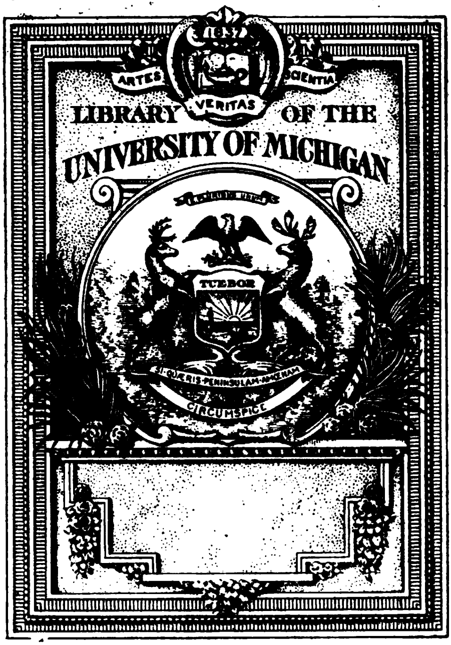
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MEMOIRS OF A MILLIONAIRE

BY

LUCIA TRUE (AMES) Mead

AUTHOR OF "GREAT THOUGHTS FOR LITTLE THINKERS"

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
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Dedicated

TO

MY ONLY BROTHER, CHARLES H. AMES.

Written for all men and women to whom the privilege of American citizenship has been vouchsafed, and to whom the stewardship of wealth has been entrusted.

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

SINCE the recent death of the noble woman whose name has become a household word all over our land, and whose memoirs form the subject of this volume, I have been repeatedly importuned to give to the public some account of her remarkable life.

It is too soon yet to present an adequate biography, and for such a task I should consider myself entirely unfitted. I have, however, endeavored, though somewhat hastily, to put together such material, chiefly selections from newspaper reports, letters, and diaries, as shall throw light upon the numerous projects that were the outcome of her thought and generosity, and which in certain ways are unparalleled in the annals of those whose wealth has been devoted to the cause of humanity.

Cut off in the full ripeness of early womanhood, her work was nevertheless accomplished, and millions shall in the ages to come reap perennial harvests from the seed which in one short year her wisdom and foresight sowed far and wide.

The world at large will know somewhat of her work; but only to those who knew her best, to whom she revealed the warmth and intensity of her strong nature, can the full beauty of her life be known.

The constant, subtle charm of her manner, now gracious and dignified, now unconsciously naïve and simple, only a master could portray. I must content myself, therefore, with giving, in simplest words, but a few of the many reminiscences that memory brings back of those moments which may serve to make clear the thoughts and purposes that were the mainspring of all her action, and which made her what she was, the noblest woman I have ever known.

I have hesitated about using the word "Memoirs" in the title of this volume. That word has a somewhat doleful and funereal sound, suggestive of anything but the bright, vigorous life of her who was so intensely warm and alive. But perhaps there is no other word that so well expresses what I have here put together, and so I leave it as I wrote it first, "Memoirs of a Millionaire."

BOSTON, *June* 7, 189–.

MEMOIRS OF A MILLIONAIRE.

CHAPTER I.

> The class of which I speak make themselves merry without duties. They sit in decorated club-houses in the cities, and burn tobacco and play whist; in the country they sit idle in stores and bar-rooms, and burn tobacco, and gossip and sleep. They complain of the flatness of American life; America has no illusions, no romance. They have no perception of its destiny. They are not Americans. — EMERSON, *The Fortune of the Republic.*

IT was on the evening of election day that I first saw her. I had come up from Salem to Boston, to spend the night and hear Booth and Barrett the next day, and I had gone to dine at aunt Madison's on Louisburg Square.

The lamps had not been lighted, and we were all sitting cosily around the open grate after dinner, talking over the *matinée*, and jesting with two or three of Will's college friends who were there for the evening, when the portière was noiselessly drawn aside, and Mildred Brewster came in with a cheery good evening.

I can recall now just how she looked, as, after the introductions were over, she stood leaning on the back of aunt Madison's chair, with the ruddy glow of the firelight on her face, and her lithe figure dimly outlined against the shadowy background.

I did not notice her much at first, for, after her blithe greeting, on seeing strangers she had drawn back into the shadow and sat so quietly that I, carrying on a gay banter with the young men, had almost forgotten her.

I do not remember what was said at first. It did not make much impression on me at the time, until, after a while, the talk grew a little more serious, and the young men began to speak of their plans for the future. They were all seniors, and each of them, except Will, had plenty of money in his own right, with apparently nothing in life more burdensome to do than to draw checks and order dinners at Young's.

They were a handsome trio, broad-chested, keen-eyed, clad in the daintiest of linen from Noyes Brothers, — "the jolliest swells in the class," Will called them.

Aunt Madison asked them, apropos of the election, how they had voted, for they were all residents of Boston and had passed their majority. They were evidently rather amused at the query, but each and all politely replied that they had n't much enthusiasm about voting, and it having been a rainy day, they had not taken the trouble to go to the polls.

"You see, the fact is," said the young man with the blonde mustache whom Will called Ned Conro, "voting is a confounded bore, any way."

"But of course you have an interest in national politics, if not in municipal affairs?" said aunt Madison, inquiringly, as she looked up from her knitting and beamed benevolently at the young man through her gold-bowed spectacles. "I suppose you young men at Harvard, with all your study of history and political economy, are wide awake about all these things."

"Oh, we talk free trade and protection more or less, that is, the fellows did who took that course of study last year. I don't go in for that sort of thing myself very much; my money is n't in manufactures, and I don't care a continental about the tariff one way or the other. And as for politics, — of course we all go in for the hurrah and fun in a presidential campaign, but I don't look forward to doing anything further in that line after I graduate. It is all well enough for any one who has a fancy for it and who wants to run for office, and that sort of thing. But there can't be more than two senators and one governor in a state at a time, and anything less than that is n't worth the trouble.

"I 've mighty little respect for any man who condescends to be a ward politician. Boston is an Irish city, after all, though last year some of the better class got their blood up and had a clearing out; but the game is n't worth the candle, and I, for one, am willing to let the Irish go the whole figure if they wish to do it. We can't get rid of them, and it does n't pay to mix up with them. I don't propose to vote to have my father, or any other gentleman of good old New England stock, sit beside some liquor-seller or grocer as common councilman or alderman."

"Neither do I," ejaculated my *vis-à-vis*, whom Will had introduced as Mr. Mather; "a fellow who begins to bother his head about all these little twopenny municipal affairs only soils his hands for his pains, and does n't improve matters one atom. It 's well enough to vote if one wants to, but what does a single vote amount to? It counts no more when cast by a Harvard professor than by some South Cove 'Mick.' Suppose Mr. Smith and Mr. Brown are up for school committee; you don't know a thing about either of them, except that they are nominated by a set of rummies and demagogues, or else by a lot of women or pious temperance cranks. You are a professional man and your time is worth ten dollars an hour, — you don't care a fig about the whole school committee business anyway; it 's the women's affair — they can vote on that. Let them turn out and manage it as they did last year, if they want to; but you can't expect a man to look after these matters, and be elbowed and hooted down at the caucuses, if he has the tastes of a gentleman and all the responsibilities of a profession or a large business on his shoulders."

"The fact is that in municipal matters the ballot ought to be put on a property basis, and until that is done, I shall bother myself precious little about it," remarked the third young gentleman, twirling his seal and addressing his three feminine listeners.

I wondered why Mildred's cheeks had grown so rosy and why her dark eyes had such a gleam in them as she laid down the bit of embroidery on which her fingers had been busy, and turned toward the speaker. "What a profile!" I thought; "almost pure Greek, only the chin is a little too square."

"The truth is," the young man continued, "we have no great men now and no great issues, unless you call all this frenzy about the school question a great issue. We 've got to come to see that the government has no right to tax its citizens to teach history, anyway. It 's an imposition to tax a man to send some one else's child to a high school. Let the state give a child the three R's, and then if he wants to learn about Tetzel or Luther, let his father pay to have him taught in his own way. Politics is no profession for a young man. There 's no great amount of money in it, unless you 're mighty shrewd, and tricky, too; and as for fame, the man must be pretty thick-skinned who can stand the pelting which every reputation gets nowadays, and not wince under it. For my part, I think democracy is a good deal played out. It was all right so long as men *were* equal; but we 're getting about as stratified a society now as there is anywhere in the Old World; and there 's no use in the sentimental every-man-a-brother kind of talk. I don't propose to shake the greasy hand of any of these beastly foreigners that are coming here and crowding us to the wall. I don't grudge them the rights of American citizenship; they may have it and welcome, if they want it; but where they step in I step out. In fact, I think I shall settle down in Paris or Florence for a while. There 's lots more fun for a fellow over there."

There was more of this sort of talk. I watched Mildred's face, and noticed that her lips were twitching and her fingers playing nervously with the fringe of a scarlet silk shawl which she wore. Evidently she was under some stress of strong emotion, though for what reason I but vaguely guessed. She had come out of the shadow, and stood tall and stately, with her arm resting on the mantel and her eyes fixed on the speakers with such a look as I had never before seen on any countenance. There was anger and pity and contempt, strangely mingled, on her mobile features. She had forgotten herself, and I think they were fairly startled at the look they read in her tell-tale face.

Will made an attempt to change the subject, but Mr. Mather broke in: "You look as though you did not agree with us, Miss Brewster. Come, we have monopolized the conversation so far, now tell us what *you* think."

She did not speak at first, and there was an awkward silence for a minute. When it was broken, her voice sounded so painfully hard and calm in its effort not to tremble that I scarcely recognized it.

"Within two weeks," she said, speaking slowly, "I have sat for five hours face to face with the leading anarchists of New England. I have questioned them, and they have told me frankly of their doctrines, which you already know, and which, I scarcely need to say, I heartily detest. But I have not heard, either from the lips of these misguided men or from any one for many months, anything which has so shocked and surprised me as what I have just listened to here."

I felt that she was trembling as she spoke, but her voice was low and quiet.

She continued: "When one is filled with indignation and grief it is difficult to speak justly and wisely, and therefore, if you will excuse me, I think that I will not trust myself to say anything further."

"Good heavens!" cried Mr. Mather, staring at her in undisguised amazement, while his companions glanced slyly at each other with faint smiles and an evident endeavor to make the best of an embarrassing situation.

"I think, dear, you had better tell them what you are thinking of, lest they misunderstand you; of course you don't mean that they are worse than anarchists," said aunt Madison, gently.

"No, not worse, but more to blame," replied Miss Brewster, with extraordinary candor, and then recollecting herself, a crimson tide suddenly mantled her neck and cheek and brow, and she drew back again into the shadow.

"I beg your pardon," she stammered; and then with a little forced laugh she added, "you see, you ought n't to have tempted me to speak. I was sure to give offense if I spoke my thoughts."

"Ah, but we can't excuse you unless you go on," said Ned Conro, persuasively. "As for me, you have whetted my curiosity so that I shan't sleep a wink to-night," he went on, with a twinkle in his eye, "unless I know why my father's son and heir, who has hitherto supposed himself to be always on the side of law and order, is more to blame than these foreign wretches who have come over here with the notion in their addled heads that they are going to upset this nineteenth-century civilization with a few ounces of dynamite."

Mr. Gordon echoed Mr. Conro's request, while a quizzical smile played around his lips, and I knew as well as if he had told me, that he was saying to himself, "Gad, she 's a specimen! One of these cranky women's-righters, no doubt. How they do like to hold forth! These girls always spoil a fellow's fun with their high and mighty theories and ideas." And this son of a quadruple millionaire thrust his hands deep into the pockets of his English trousers and stretched himself comfortably to listen, with all the complacent condescension of a man to whom twenty-two years of experience and masculine wisdom gave a consciousness of virtuous superiority.

The flush had faded from Mildred's cheek, but I fancied from the look in her eyes that she was in no mood to be trifled with; this was no mere passing gust of passion. She had received a wound which had cut her to the quick; for, as I afterwards learned to know, hers was one of those rare natures, rare in men, rarer still in women, which scarcely feels a personal slight, but to which a grand, absorbing idea is more real and vital than all else, and which counts treason to this the unpardonable sin.

"If I speak, I must speak plainly," said Mildred. "I have neither time nor wit to clothe my thoughts in ambiguous, inoffensive words. Like plain, blunt Antony, I can only 'speak right on' and say 'what in my heart doth beat and burn.'"

"Good, I like that," said Mr. Mather gravely, and there was an instant's silence, broken only by the chime of the cathedral clock as it struck the hour.

"I have been thinking," said Mildred quietly, "of those words in that record of the young Hebrew, who, it is said, sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. I have been thinking also of those words of our own Emerson: 'We live in a new and exceptional age. America is another name for Opportunity. Our whole history appears like a last effort of Providence in behalf of the human race.' Perhaps you do not see the connection between these two thoughts, but to me it seems very close. To have for one's inheritance the birthright of American citizenship seems to me something so rich and precious that to despise it and ignobly sell it, — not like Esau for the mess of pottage which could relieve his hunger, — but to sell it to the stranger for the sake of gaining immunity from responsibility, yes, more than that, throwing it away out of sheer contempt for it and ingratitude for what it has done for one, this seems to me the acme of cowardice and selfishness."

I noticed that Mr. Mather knit his brows at this, and I thought I detected a slight flush in his cheeks, but perhaps it was only the firelight. Mildred did not look up or hesitate, but went steadily on.

"We sit here in the Promised Land
That flows with Freedom's honey and milk;
But 't was they won it, sword in hand,
Making the nettle danger soft for us as silk."

"Yes, they won it, not we; and we, the heirs of all the ages, for whom the whole creation has groaned and travailed until now, we, the favored children of the best age, the best land which history has known, we idly fold our hands and let the wealth of all the past, which others have toiled for and shed bloody sweat to gain, fall into our laps as a matter of course, as if it were but the just due of such lordly creatures as we.

"Of what value, pray, is all our study of history if we have so little realizing sense of its meaning, if we have no imagination to fill out with quivering, throbbing life this record of the past, which shows what mankind has been, and what, thank God, we have escaped?

"Of what value are the sacrifices of those who at bitter cost bought us our freedom and privilege, if we are so lost to all sense of honor as to tacitly say, 'everything has been done for us, to be sure, but we can't be expected to go out of our way to see that it is passed along to those who are less favored'?"

Mr. Mather made a gesture of dissent and looked up as if to speak; but Mildred did not notice him. She was gazing with fixed eyes into the shadows, and seemed to have forgotten her little audience and to be addressing herself to an unnumbered throng of unseen listeners. Her bosom heaved and her breath came and went quickly as she went on with her relentless sarcasm.

"Yes, our business as immortal sons of God is first of all to look out for our precious selves. Let us all see to it that no annoying social or economic questions shall disturb our minds. Let us not be distracted from our culture and amusements by being forced to waste time in settling the prosaic bread and butter problems of the 'lower classes.' Let us wash our hands of all responsibility. Why should we hold ourselves debtors either to the Greeks or to the barbarians?

"Oh, we are not hard-hearted. We would live and let live. But we can count it no part of our business to soil our fingers by lending a hand to the poor wretch whose blind guide has led him into the miry ditch.

"Let him who 'despises his birthright' just think for an instant what citizenship on the continent of Europe means. You talk about finding 'more fun' in Paris and Vienna than here, yes, to be sure; for there you have nothing to do but to skim the cream of everything and dream away your youth surrounded by all that the thought of the ages and modern science can devise to stimulate your already fastidious palate. But suppose ✓ you were a *citizen* of Germany or Austria or Russia, and must spend from three to six of the best years of your life in active service in the army; suppose you were taxed to the extent of over thirty per cent. of your earnings like the people of Italy; suppose you knew that your country was growing poorer and taxation was on the frightful increase as is the case in continental countries; suppose you were taxed to support a church in which you did not believe, and a government which granted you no representation; suppose privilege and prejudice hung like a millstone round every effort for your social advancement!

"Why," continued Mildred after a moment's pause, "just imagine for an instant all that is involved in the difference in comfort and mode of life from the simple statement that during the ten years from 1870 to 1880, when the United States decreased its aggregate taxation nine per cent., Germany increased hers over fifty per cent. Imagine, if you can, what it means to the lives of millions of human beings when I say that during a period when the wealth of Europe decreased per caput three per cent. that of our country increased nearly forty per cent.

"It is one thing, I have found, to travel in Europe untaxed, unmolested, and unaffected by that gloomy war cloud which continually hovers over every nation; where, even in times of peace, one man out of twenty-two is withdrawn from productive industries to train himself to destroy his fellow-beings. It is one thing, I say, to be an irresponsible traveler, free to come and go and say what one pleases; it is quite another to be born in that country and subject to its laws.

"Let those who count their American citizenship of such slight worth think what a delightful existence theirs would be if they were so favored as to be one of the subjects of the Russian Tsar! Think of the bliss of living in a land where one is never disturbed by the encroachments of foreigners, or expected to attend caucuses and polls; where, in fact, the less he knows about the government the better for him and his! Fancy the pleasure in reading newspapers where the news of the day is under such careful surveillance, through the kindness of the censorship, that one is never disturbed by troublesome political matters, and has always the calm consciousness that everything is going well, although ninety per cent. of the hundred millions over whom the Russian flag waves cannot write their names; where a man may not go from one town to another without a passport; where for joining a club that advocates a constitutional monarchy, as here you might join a club that advocates Nationalism, you may be subject without a moment's warning to arrest and solitary confinement for a year or two without a trial! You have read Kennan and Stepniak. You know these are hard facts.

"So when I see men who have been ground between the millstones of caste, priestcraft, and governmental oppression come here and turn against all government, I have less contempt and more patience for them than for the young men of our land, who owe almost every blessing that they enjoy to this government, and who from mere indolence and apathy choose to allow the demagogue and ignorant alien to shape its destiny.

"You complain that we have a 'stratified society.' Are you not doing your best to make it a stratified society and create a caste system when you advocate a property qualification for the ballot, and would deny all but the barest rudiments of education to the poor boy? One would think that you had been brought up in a monarchy and did not realize that from the people we must choose our legislators as well as our voters, and that a system which can be tolerated in a country where rulers are hereditary is most perilous for a government that is of 'the people, by the people, and for the people.'

"You say 'there are no great men now,' 'no great issues.' True, the war is over, and Grant and Lincoln are dead, but

'Life may be given in many ways,
And loyalty to truth be sealed
As bravely in the closet as in the field,
So bountiful is fate.'

"I do not doubt if our flag were openly dishonored you, too, would spring to arms and give your life-blood as heroically as those who fell at Manassas or in the Wilderness.

"But how many young men have that kind of heroism that impels them to devote their culture and ability to unostentatious, unceasing service to the state, though it bring no glory or reward in fame or office? No, the cowards are not so often to be found on the battlefield as at the committee meeting and the caucus.

"True, there seems to be nothing sublime in being a faithful health commissioner, an Anthony Comstock, a General Armstrong, or a Felix Adler; nothing glorious in busying one's self with such prosy things as labor statistics and tenement houses, with prison reform and sewage and primary schools and ward politics. 'T is a thankless task, and the large per cent. of our Boston legal voters who did not vote yesterday doubtless think, if they think at all, that even the casting of a ballot once or twice a year is too great a sacrifice of their valuable time, and more than ought to be expected of men whose private and social interests are of far more importance than the welfare of the body politic.

"And as for caucuses, how preposterous to expect a man who has such important matters as Art Club receptions, Psychical Research meetings, and Longwood toboggan parties to attend, to spend one or two evenings a year in the company of grocers and saloon-keepers, all for the sake of defeating some lamplighter or pawnbroker who wants a nomination for the city council! What difference does it make who is on the council, provided taxes are not raised?

"Yes," continued Mildred, and a shade of melancholy replaced the quiet scorn in her tone, "the last thing that you or they ever dream of is that you have a debt to pay and are basely repudiating it."

The voice, whose tremor at last betrayed the intensity of the feeling that had hitherto been carefully guarded, ceased, and suddenly starting with a self-conscious look, and coloring deeply, Mildred glided softly from the room. Aunt Madison followed her.

The fire had burned low and the light was dim. The young men had forgotten me in the sofa corner.

There was not a word said for a minute or two as they sat looking into the bed of coals and listening to the wind shuddering through the bare branches of the elms outside. Mr. Mather sat leaning forward with his elbows on his knees and his head on his hands; I could not see his face. Presently he looked up and made a motion as if to speak, but apparently he changed his mind, for he said nothing. At last Mr. Gordon's voice broke the silence.

"I say, Madison," he asked, with a studiously polite manner, "who is this charming Miss Brewster who has favored us with the benefit of her views?"

"She is a sort of second cousin of my mother," Will replied. "She has just returned from abroad, and I have n't seen much of her yet."

"Well," rejoined the other, "with your permission, I will venture to say that with all due respect to your mother's second or third cousin, I would as lief hear it thunder as to hear her talk. Why can't a pretty woman let well enough alone and not go into hysterics over what she does n't know anything about? You would think, to hear her go on, that the country was going to the devil, and that we were the cause of it."

"I wonder if all those facts about Russia and the thirty per cent. taxation in Italy are really true," interposed Mr. Conro, meditatively. "She reeled off all those statistics like a schoolma'am saying dates."

"They are true if she says so, you can bet your life on that," answered Will, thoroughly nettled. "Being out at Cambridge most of the time, I have n't seen much of her, and I never heard her say so much on any subject before to-night. I was about as much surprised as you were at her coming out in that way; but if you and Gordon think she is the kind of girl to go into hysterics over nothing, you are mightily mistaken. Most people talk for the sake of talking, but I 've seen enough of her to know that when she says a thing it stands for something. What you said hurt her in a way a fellow like you can't understand. You 've no interest in a girl who has any notions beyond flattering you into thinking you are the most stunning fellow going."

"Beg pardon," drawled Gordon, "but" —

"Hold on there," interposed Mr. Mather, grimly; "you 've said enough. What she said was solid gospel, and you know it as well as I do."

CHAPTER II.

The books of Scripture only suffer from being subjected to requirements which we have ceased to apply to the books of common literature. — DEAN STANLEY, *History of the Jewish Church.*

The Protestant Reformation shows how men tried to lodge infallibility in the Bible. . . . The great point of our present belief is that there is no such infallible record anywhere in church or council or book. — PHILLIPS BROOKS, *Harvard Divinity Address*, 1884.

BOSTON, *Jan.* 6. 25 Louisburg Square.

JESSIE DEAR, — I have been sitting for the last half hour in the broad, cushioned window-seat of my cosy attic room, looking far out over the mass of chimney-tops to the towers and spires beyond the hill and the Public Garden.

I love to sit here quietly on Sunday afternoons, and when the sunset comes I throw aside my books and watch the shifting, brilliant colors turning the blue Charles into a sheet of glimmering gold and dyeing with rosy hues the snowy slopes of Corey Hill beyond.

Have you been away so long as to have forgotten these dear old sights? And do you recall that on this western slope of Beacon Hill from which I write to you lived the hermit Blackstone of Shawmut, before Winthrop or any Puritan had thought of settling Boston town?

I like old places. I like to be on the oldest spot in this old, historic town, as you may easily imagine, remembering all my antiquarian enthusiasm when we were at school. Well, I have not outgrown it in the least, in spite of all my modern radicalism about many things.

I wonder, dear, what all these ten years have brought to you. I have been sitting and thinking, as the sunset glow has faded in the western sky, all its glory turning so soon to dull, cold gray, how in these few minutes the past years seem typified. What glorious visions, what radiant achievements illumined the heavens when we looked at them with the eyes of eighteen! What would we not, what could we not, dream of doing then? I remember how you vowed that I was a genius, and were sure that ten years would not pass before I should win renown. And now, to-night, on my twenty-eighth birthday, I sit here as dull and prosy and commonplace a spinster as one can well find in this city of spinsters.

After one is twenty-five and the birthdays begin to be a little unwelcome, I suppose one is apt to be made a little morbid by them, though I solace myself by thinking that since college girls in these days rarely finish their studies before twenty-two, twenty-eight does not seem so ancient as it was once thought to be.

How strange that we should have known so little of each other, we who vowed that "ocean-sundered continents" should never make our girlhood's love less warm! But after your change of name and transfer to the China Mission, while I was at Smith College, I lost sight of you, and, missing your letters, knew not where to write. So you will understand my long silence and know that the Mildred of ten years ago is the same Mildred today, only no longer a girl, but a woman.

A woman, with many ambitions unsatisfied, with many heroes dethroned, but with the same loves and hopes and fears, and with the same ideals, although their attainment seems farther off with the growing years.

I have slowly come to recognize and be reconciled to my mediocrity; to know that I have not had a thought but has been common to humanity; that I am no whit wiser or better than all my fellows; and that what you in girlish enthusiasm flattered me into believing was creative power was simply a capacity to appreciate and be moved by what was great.

I have longed for power, but, believe me, not for name or fame. Simply to have had the consciousness in myself that the world was better and wiser for my having lived would have made all drudgery and toil a joy and privilege. But the blessedness of giving and doing in a large measure has not been granted to me. Not that I blame fate or circumstance or environment. I have had health and freedom and friends; no hindrances and no great sorrows since mother left me alone five years ago.

The failure lies with myself alone. Sometimes there has been an unutterable loneliness and a longing for something, I know not what; but I suppose it must be for the love which has not yet come to me, and which now may never come.

But I do not let that burden me overmuch. I have my daily task. I love my work; and here, among my books, I thankfully count myself rich indeed in the society of all the great and wise and good of whose treasures I am the happy heir. I have traveled, too, and seen the Old World cities and the castles, palaces, and ruins of which we used to dream. It was not exactly the blissful experience I had fancied, for I was doomed to be the companion of a stupid old dowager whose money bought my time and service, and to whom I was useful as an interpreter of the arts and languages with which she was unfamiliar.

I saw a great deal and learned some things. It helped me a little towards reaching that goal of culture at which I aim, whence I can truly say that "I count nothing human foreign to me." It helped to free me somewhat from the narrowness of my age and environment. I have become a little more of a Greek, a little less of a rugged Goth. Not that mere travel did this; if my eyes had not begun to be opened before, I should have seen nothing. I have verified nothing more thoroughly than Emerson's saying, "Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful we must carry it with us or we find it not."

I miss the picturesqueness and the charm of the

Old World life. I am surprised to find how shocked and annoyed I am at the crudities and Philistinism of which I was once oblivious. But, after all, I am glad to be back; glad to be in the current of real life again, and to take my share in it. It is worth something to live in a land where one does not have to despise the men or pity the women; where a man is not ashamed to be seen carrying his own baby; where a girl can walk the streets alone and unmolested, and where a lady can earn her daily bread and be thought a lady still.

I have a quiet home with my mother's cousin — "auntie," I call her; and I have settled down to steady work with a concert or play or toboggan party to give it a little zest now and then. My classes take me to Dorchester and Cambridge and Longwood. Once a week I meet a score or so of our Boston society women in a Commonwealth Avenue drawing-room, who manage, among their thousand and one lectures, lessons, and engagements of every sort, to squeeze in an hour to hear me discourse on the topics of the day, when I try to teach them about some phases of our nineteenth century life of which they, like most women, know but little. As these ladies include all shades of religious and political belief and non-belief, I have to choose my words, as you may imagine.

I write a little occasionally for the "Transcript" or "Woman's Journal," or some other equally inoffensive and unremunerative sheet. I visit my North Enders, and think I am doing God more service in trying to keep some of my small Hibernians from being sent to the Reform School than I ever used to accomplish in teaching Jewish history at the Mission.

I have given up Sunday-school work. Not that I disbelieve in it, but I find myself less and less able to adapt myself to the requirements of superintendents and "lesson helps," and my conscience now forbids me to teach what I could once repeat so glibly and confidently.

Yes, let me say it frankly, — though I fear it will greatly shock you, you dear, pious soul, — I have gone over to the "New Theology," and I have gone so far and so irrevocably that but few of those churches where my childhood's faith is still believed dare open their doors to me.

I wonder if you can conceive how painful it has been to me to find the friends for whom I care most condemning as irreligious every thoughtful man or woman who ventures to treat the Hebrew scriptures in a reasonable way.

My last Sunday-school class was in the home school, where I had bright girls of sixteen. I did my best to make the Bible a living book to them, to make them study the history of the Jews in the same natural and enthusiastic way that they studied their Greek history at school, but I soon found that they considered this sacrilegious. They looked at me with cold, critical glances when I tried to spiritualize their "Gates Ajar" idea of heaven. I found that they had gone home and told their mothers that I did not believe in God or heaven or hell, and, to my bitter mortification and dismay, they left me one by one until I was alone.

Doubtless I had little wisdom. I was trying to teach them in a few months what it had taken me years of growth to reach. In trying to disabuse them of their anthropomorphic notions of God, I had succeeded in making Him only a nonentity to them. In taking away a literal Garden of Eden and the serpent, and substituting a theory of evolution, I had, in their imaginations, abolished all inspiration and moral responsibility. Not that they were girls who troubled themselves very much about such things; they could dance and flirt as well as the best; but as for really daring to face the evidence on such matters, that was wicked and dangerous, in their opinion.

Nor was this all. One good old clergyman, to whose church I brought a letter of recommendation, and who after my candid talk felt obliged to deny me a welcome, said, with tears in his eyes, that he hoped my mother's prayers would save me.

It made me feel forlorn and homesick for a while. I like the strength, sincerity, and earnestness which the old faith gave, and I cannot lightly break away from it. I hate the lukewarmness and apathy of many of the more radical faith, and I cannot make up my mind to cast my lot with them. Besides, I have a half fear that, after all, they have not begun, even intellectually, to probe to the bottom these great historic beliefs on which the church has stood for ages. I fear that they treat them too cavalierly, too superficially. I find about as much intolerance among the so-called liberals as among the conservatives.

To me sin is not an ailment to be cured with sugared plums. The Puritanism in me rebels at the weakness and flabbiness of many who have left the old faith for a broader one. However much my mind is forced to accept their doctrine, my sympathies abide with the men of moral earnestness who still think it their business to be "saving souls."

To me the doctrine of the Trinity is something more than a mathematical absurdity, as the men of one party say; and, on the other hand, something more than an inscrutable mystery to be accepted without deep philosophic study, as the men of the other party hold.

I pity and long to help the poor souls groping for some solution of the religious problems peculiar to our day. There are thousands of them — more than any one knows — inside the fold of the church itself, fed, but not nourished, and famishing for the kind of food which their good pastors know not how to give.

How many times I have gone to church bewildered, utterly wretched, my soul crying out for the living God, and listened to a cheap, well-meant discourse against "Ingersoll, Emerson, and all other unbelievers in the inspired Word of God," with an earnest exhortation to refrain at our peril from "searching into what are the hidden mysteries."

I understood the preacher's standpoint, poor soul! I respected him and his effort, but oh, how helpless he was to do anything for me who could detect the sophistry and lack of discrimination in all this talk!

Oh, if I could help those who have been driven to question the whole of truth, when they thus find out a part of it to have been crude or false! And I pity almost as much the many timid ones who, like myself, are longing to stay in the mother church, to that end being sorely tempted to quibble with creeds, but who find no place either in or out of the church which would exactly express their true religious attitude.

How strange all this must seem to you, who used to feel that heaven and earth might fall, but that I should never give up my faith.

No, please God, I shall never give up faith, nor hold less faithfully to the eternal verities which alone make life worth living. Never have I felt more deeply than to-day the truth of the old words of the catechism, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever." But I do not hold that keeping the faith is an adherence to any creed or an absolute acceptance of any book, even if it be the Book of books.

I have come to feel that the teaching of my childhood which made historic facts, or what were assumed to be historic facts, of equal importance with the eternal and immutable laws of moral and spiritual growth, — I have come, I say, to feel that his was false. Ah me, the pity of it!

I write you all this because I want you to know the strongest reason that has prevented me from following in your footsteps and, as I once dreamed of doing, giving myself up either at home or abroad to the grand missionary work which still seems to me the most satisfying kind of work in the world. No, I cannot be a missionary; I think I shall never dare to teach any one; I don't know how; but, thank God, I have come to see a little more clearly some truths to which I think it is possible for the human mind to attain. The vision thus gained, though still at times a fleeting one, has, I firmly believe, placed me forever beyond the reach of the nightmare of doubts and mortal terrors which first assailed me after I dared trust myself to think and question.

No one, not bred in a New England home with all the Puritan traditions imbibed with every breath, can realize the fever and despair that I have felt more than once after I dared to think and face the result of my thought. But that torture can never come again. Not that I have relapsed into indifference or have heeded the pleadings of my devout friends to "only believe," that so I might dread my doubts as impious and accept without question the creed of my fathers. No! Kant, Hegel, and Fichte, Carlyle and Emerson, Robertson, Stanley, Phillips Brooks, and, more than all, the unprejudiced study of the Bible itself, have kept me from that.

I no longer tremble at the question whether the record of the miracles be fact or no; it touches not my spiritual life. The baby born next door yesterday is a greater miracle to me than Lazarus raised from the dead; the morning's breakfast turned into vital force that guides this hand as marvelous as water changed to wine. Whether the resurrection of Jesus be literal fact or not, it in no wise affects my immortality. My faith rests on something surer than the accuracy of any historic fact.

Are you shocked? Yes, doubtless, for so should I have been once. I do not expect you to understand me yet, unless you too have been climbing up to the light by the same path in which I have been led. You will think that I have been venturing on dangerous ground, but I could not write to you without granting your request to tell you how it was with me in my inmost self.

You ask whether I am married or am going to be. The first question I have answered; as to the second, the most that I can say is that when a woman has lived a dozen years beyond sweet sixteen and has never been very deeply in love, it argues either that she has lived like a nun, or something rather uncomplimentary to her heart, and that there is precious little prospect of her ever finding the right one after that.

They say no woman ever fails of some time having at least one suitor. Well, I have had my one. A burly, broad-chested business man he was, with very decided ideas about protection and mining stock, with a good deal of amused wonder at my independence of thought and action, and a chivalrous old-fashioned pity for gentlewomen who had to earn their living. He felt pretty desperately when I said "no," and I had to say it three or four times before he could believe it, for he had been so sure that a poor young creature like me must long for his strong arm and good bank account to shield her from the "world's cold blasts." I did like him, I confess, but not enough; not as I must love the one to whom I would gladly, heartily, pledge my whole self for life.

So, one bright spring day he sailed away for South America and never returned. He married a Spanish wife, I hear, who will inherit his millions, for he made shrewd investments and became enormously wealthy. The "Herald" had a dispatch yesterday morning announcing his death from sunstroke. It gave me a shock. Yes, he was a good man, and I did like him; but I am glad I am not his widow in spite of his millions.

We were talking at lunch to-day about wealth, and when I answered the question "How much money would you wish for if you could have your wish?" by saying "Twenty-five millions," every one looked aghast.

"What, *you*, Mildred, of all persons! Why, you never cared for diamonds or horses or yachts or anything grand," exclaimed one.

"What in the world would you do with it?" asked another. "You could n't spend half a million with your modest tastes, and the rest would be simply a dead weight. You would be bored to death with lawyers and beggars, and have brain fever in six weeks."

"Oh no," interposed a third; "she would buy shoes for all the barefoot children, and build colleges from Alaska to Key West."

"If you were like most people you would find it the hardest thing in the world to spend your money wisely," said auntie, sagely.

So I kept my counsel and said nothing. I can't help wishing, though, to know what will become of these millions which I might have had by saying that one little word five years ago. It seems to me I should not be utterly at a loss to find some wise uses for them, and it would not be by building colleges which are not needed, or by encouraging pauperism. . . .

CHAPTER III.

(Extract from the "Boston Herald.")

MILDRED'S MILLIONS. — BOSTON'S BEAUTIFUL BELLE FALLS HEIRESS TO A FORTUNE ESTIMATED AT THIRTY MILLIONS! MISS MILDRED BREWSTER THE SOLE HEIRESS.

When the rumor in yesterday's South American dispatches hinted that the colossal fortune amassed by the late Mr. William Dunreath was, according to his will, to be transferred *in toto* to a Boston lady, when moreover, on investigation, the name of the aforesaid lady was disclosed by her lawyer, an enterprising representative of the "Herald" was not long in finding his way to the residence of this favored daughter of fortune.

Two other journalists, with pencil and pad in readiness, arrived almost simultaneously and were shown into the reception room.

Miss Brewster was out.

Would her ladyship soon return?

That was doubtful.

A skillful use of some of Uncle Sam's coin, however, secured an "aside" in the library with the sable domestic whose acquaintance with desirable facts proved a godsend.

"Was Miss Brewster young?"

Certainly. She had just celebrated her twenty-fourth birthday, or, to quote our informant more literally, "Yes, sah, she is done gone twenty-fo' shuah, fo' I made her buffday cake."

"Was Miss Brewster handsome?"

In response to this momentous question this jewel of a Chloe produced from a corner of the library a photograph album containing two cabinet photographs, taken in Boston and Paris respectively, and representing one of the most attractive types of petite female beauty. One picture was taken in a jaunty riding habit, displaying to good advantage a slender, trim figure, with a graceful poise to a very pretty head, and a pair of fascinating dark eyes looking frankly at you from under the hat-brim. The other was in a white evening dress modestly covering the sloping shoulders, the hair worn Pompadour, and no ornaments save flowers. There was a delicacy and refinement indicated in the small ear and sensitive mouth, which betokened generations of the best blood and culture. It was gratifying to perceive that the enviable possessor of one of the largest private fortunes in New England was evidently richly endowed by nature with every charm which could lend grace to the brilliant position in society that she without doubt is destined to fill.

The "Herald" representative inquired further as to the past history of Miss Brewster, and learned that she was the only child of a physician, was born in Cambridge, has spent some years in foreign travel and study under the chaperonage of a distinguished leader of society, was presented at the Court of St. James, and received marked attention from some of the scions of the oldest and noblest houses of England.

She is supposed to have had a small independent fortune of her own, but having literary and philanthropic tastes, has quietly devoted herself to study and works of charity, thus depriving society of one peculiarly fitted to be one of its brightest ornaments.

The connection between the defunct millionaire and the charming girl upon whom he has lavished all his wealth seems hard to prove. From all that could be learned, however, it seems conclusive that an engagement existed between them, and that the death of Mr. Dunreath was a great shock to the fortunate lady of his choice. In the absence of any family or near relatives, Mr. D. being an only son and a bachelor, she will find no one to dispute the will. This latter point was confirmed by her lawyer, Mr. Kilrain, of No. 55 Pemberton Square, who, however, remained very provokingly non-committal on all other points of interest, intimating that he was thus obeying the instructions of his fair client, who modestly wishes to avoid the sudden notoriety which her fortune will necessarily bring upon her.

A call on some of her co-workers in the Associated Charities revealed the fact that Miss Brewster is ardently absorbed in her work, and has been peculiarly successful in winning the hearts of the street *gamins* in her district. She is interested in various charities, and it is anticipated that her increased wealth will not lessen the time nor the interest which she has devoted to her various benefactions.

It was intimated from one source that Miss Brewster holds very pronounced views upon women's rights, and will probably use a great part of her wealth in advancing the cause of female suffrage, but this we are loth to believe.

(Extract from the "Boston Globe.")

. . . After waiting an hour and calling at three different times, the representative of the "Globe" was finally so fortunate as to encounter the fair lady in whom the public is now feeling so warm an interest. She had just returned home, and was standing in the hall with her little toque of wine-colored velvet still crowning her chestnut tresses, and her tall, stately figure draped from head to foot in a fur-trimmed cloak of the same shade.

She received the "Globe" representative most courteously, ushering him into a cosy little reception room, and meanwhile drawing off the *gants de suede* which encased her shapely hands. She seemed nervous and tired, but had a brilliant color which deepened perceptibly when requested to grant an interview. The involuntary look of surprise and *hauteur* which accompanied this only enhanced her beauty, but quickly recovering herself she replied without embarrassment that there was nothing whatever that she wished to state to the public. She had not been apprised of the nature of the will until within three days. Since then she had been overwhelmed with business arrangements, and was very tired and wished to see only her intimate friends.

One question, however, she so far forgot herself as to answer, namely, as to whether she should change her residence. She replied that she purposed soon to leave town for an indefinite period. A further question designed to draw out some information regarding her acquaintance with Mr. Dunreath, whom it is certain she has for a long time corresponded with, met with no reply beyond "I will bid you good evening."

Miss Brewster is certainly a very prepossessing lady. In addition to her beauty her voice is particularly well modulated and pleasing. She is decidedly above the medium height, and has a queenly air combined with a brisk, business-like manner, which gives evidence that she is at once a lady and a shrewd woman of the world, — an indication of anything but the helpless state into which most inexperienced women would have been thrown at so sudden and astounding a change of fortune.

In the gaslight and with such a color Miss Brewster had the appearance of being not over twenty-three; we learn, however, on unquestioned authority from a former schoolmate of hers, that she is just twenty-six, having had a birthday last week.

Miss Brewster is said to be a very devout churchwoman of the ritualistic type, and usually attends the Church of the Advent.

The Hub is certainly to be commiserated at the prospect of so soon losing a lady who would otherwise become one of its most admired belles as well as a leader of its most cultured society, and we trust that her stay though indefinite may not be prolonged.

Three of the one hundred and twenty-seven letters received by Miss Brewster during the first week after the above newspaper extracts appeared will serve as types of the whole.

LETTER NO. I.

JONESPORT, PA., *Jan* — 18—

DEREST MISS BREWSTER HONORED MISS

God has been verry bountiful too you truly and no doubt your kind heart is greatful for all his Mercies and anxshus to do your part in relieving the wos of humanity. Henceforth your couch is down and your pathway strude with roses. you have more money than you know what too do with and will take it kindly for me suggest a most useful and feesable way to do the greatest good to the greatest number which is the Christian's vitle breath. My dorter Rose Ethel Bangs is just turned sixtine and is as smart and handsum a girl as ever trod shu lether. she is awful musicle and is just dying to get a chance to go to the Boston

Conservatory, she plays the banjo best of anybody in the county and has given solo peices at some of the best concerts she plays the melodeon at meeting and the best critics say her voice is amazing a professor from Philadelfy said he had heard a great many voices but he never heard a voice that was as strong as her voice. A yere's residens in Boston would complete her education she has a young gentleman second cousin who is anxshus to show her about to see the sites and 300 dollers with what her pa can raise would just about do the bizness now dear miss when you have it in your pour to bestough such a blessing how can you refrane. We shall bless you and my dorter will be a credit to you and a jewel in the crown which our Heavenly father will bestough on all who remember the proverb it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Yours with love and regards

Mrs. Mattie T. Bangs.

P. S. I send Rose Ethel's tintype took when she was fourtine she wears her hair up now.

LETTER NO. II.

New York, N. Y., —— Street.

Dear Miss Brewster:

Permit me at this moment of your joy and unprecedented good fortune to present to you my most heartfelt congratulations.

Perhaps you may not recollect my humble self, as you always impressed me with such a sense of awe and dignity that I dared not venture to disclose to you the *profound* admiration which I have always felt for your *exalted* character.

Rarely have I known such a nature as yours. One so endowed with all the charms and graces of a *goddess* and a *saint* it has never been my fortune to meet. Do not think I am flattering you, *mon ange;* but ever since the first moment when my eyes fell on your face suffused with dewy tears, as you bade good-by to your native land, you have been the ideal of my fondest dreams.

I sailed with you on the steamer, like you bound for those shores of mystery and delight which from childhood's hour had haunted my imagination, now *hélas!* never to be revisited, for I — how can I say it? — have been doomed by fate to lose *all* that is most dear to me.

I had kept my diamond earrings until the last, but yesterday even those, my last precious treasures, had to be sacrificed. How can I relate to you the story of our disgrace!

A year ago papa failed, and we were obliged to leave our palatial home on Fifth Avenue and betake ourselves to a small hotel on W. Ninth Street. I nearly cried my eyes out. I spent days and nights in weeping over our sad fortunes, and as one by one I was obliged to surrender the darling treasures of happier days I felt that if this were to go on I should either become a *hopeless wreck* with shattered nerves and end my days in a lunatic asylum, or else that rather than suffer the mental torture which I had endured I should with my own hand take the life which was a *curse* to me.

Everything has gone from bad to worse, though I have fought against fate with all the passion of *desperation.* Our friends have deserted us; that is, all the young society which I care about and really need to keep up my spirits and make me cheerful. I can find no congenial society in the class with whom I am doomed to associate, and so I keep my room, and solace my sad hours with works of fiction, which for the time being take me out of myself, and with fancy work, which is the one little link that connects me with my happy past.

But now a crisis has come in papa's affairs. He is offered a position in Jersey City, and compels us to go with him to this *odious* place, to live in a second or third rate boarding-house, away from everything that makes life endurable.

I *cannot* do it. I should simply be burying myself alive. To one of my sensitive temperament the shock would be too great, and I know that I should become but a wreck of my former self.

I have racked my brains and tossed on my sleepless pillow many a night, endeavoring to solve the problem that is before me.

This morning a ray of light dawned upon the gloom which has enshrouded me. I picked up the morning paper and read the delightful announcement of the good fortune which has come to you. My heart throbbed with sympathetic joy, *mon amie*, to think that in this desolate world at least one whom I loved was *completely* happy.

The report says that you are soon to go abroad. Like an inspiration the thought came to me, "Oh, if only I could go with her as a *companion!*" The thought fairly suffocated me. Once the idea of attempting to go as a paid companion, of accepting money for services rendered, no matter how valuable they might be, would have brought the blush to my cheek. But my pride has been humbled, and though even now I could not do it for every one, for *you* whom I *adore* it would seem no sacrifice but a privilege.

I could be of invaluable service to you in shopping and in visiting galleries. I speak French perfectly, and could play whist or sing to you when you are tired. I know how to arrange flowers, to design toilettes, to order dinners, and can read aloud without fatigue. I could relieve you of all care, and this you will certainly require, as so many new cares have devolved upon you, and you must be distracted with all the new things you have to order and to attend to.

What steamer shall you take? I like the North German Lloyd best, — don't you?

I can be ready at a moment's notice. I await your answer in an *agony* of suspense.

Yours devotedly,

M. JEANETTE MASON.

LETTER NO. III.

E. GAINSBOROUGH, VT.

MISS BREWSTER:

DEAR MISS, — No doubt you will be very much surprised to get a letter from me for you don't know me at all and I don't know you at all and I persume you are not used to getting letters from strangers. But you are a rich kind lady and as a last resorse I turn to you for my heart is bleeding and my friends can't do no more for me. I am an inventor as you will be surprised to learn. Ever since I was able to hold a jack knife and whittle I have been whittling out things and making inventions. Some folks say I am a genius and if I had my rights I should be rolling in welth and be able to keep a horse and carriage.

My inventions have been about all sorts of things. I almost got a patent for a clothes-wringer but a mean sneak of a fellow stole it from me taking the bread from my children's mouths. My wife took in sewing and washing and the children milked the cow and kept the garden running and sometimes I got odd jobs. But a month ago Susie and Jimmie took sick with scarlet fever and wife she was up with them night and day and she took sick too and first Jimmie died and then Susie, and mother the next day.

I did the best I could and the neighbors was kind and came in spite of its being so catching.

But now there all gone and nobody but the baby and me is left. He had it light and wan't down but a day or two. I feel most crazy when I think of it all and wonder what I'm going to do. The neighbors cooked up some vittles for a few days but there poor too and I can't count on them for doing much.

I 've got to do something right off and I an't a cent of money more than enough to pay the postage of this letter.

Last night when Mis deacon Allen went by with the newspaper she had got to the P. O. she stopped and read me all about your getting rich so sudden and she said to me brother Silas if I was you I 'd just write to that Miss Brewster and if she 's a woman with a heart in her she 'll feel for that poor motherless little feller there a toddlin about, and you with your hands tied sos you cant leave him a minute. I 'd take him myself said she if my hands wasnt tied too. Which is true enough for shes five of her own and one adopted.

Now Miss Brewster if you could take my baby for a while, his name is Orlando and he is 18 months old and help me make a man of him and get on my feet a little and carry out a scheme I 've got for an improved churn I 'd thank you to my dying day. I aint a great hand at farm work for I cut my foot in a mowing machine and have been lame ever since and my hearing is bad. So you see there aint much I can do except invent and sometimes if it want for the inventing I think Id rather die. But I do feel sure sometime if I can only get a chance I can invent something that will sell and then I can repay you.

If you send for Orlie to go to Boston I must stay there too. I could n't bear to be so far away from him. I should die of lonesomeness. Could n't you get me a chance there? I am forty-six years old and a professor.[1]

yr. ob't servant,
SILAS KITTREDGE.

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[1] Of religion. — ED.

CHAPTER IV.

Notwithstanding all that England has done for the good of India, the missionaries have done more than all other agencies combined. — LORD LAWRENCE, in 1871.

. . . all this is very surprising when it is considered that five years ago nothing but the fern flourished here; native workmanship taught by the missionaries has effected this change; the lesson of the missionaries is the enchanter's wand. . . . I look back to but one bright spot in New Zealand, and that is Waimate with its Christian inhabitants. — CHARLES DARWIN, *Journal of Researches in Natural History and Geology.*

EXTRACT FROM MISS BREWSTER'S DIARY.

FOR the first time since the lawyer's call a week ago I sit down to collect my wits after this whirl of excitement, and, like the old woman in the nursery rhyme, ask myself if it can be that I am really I.

I am frightfully tired, and it may be childish to write this all out for no one's eye but my own. I cannot sleep, however, and I feel as if it would be a relief and might cool the fever in my veins to calmly make a record of some of the momentous events of these last few days. So many things are crowding upon me that I fear my mind will be a chaos if I do not attempt something like this to help me to quiet and arrange my thoughts.

When Mr. Kilrain came with the cablegram and letters, I neither laughed nor cried nor fainted. I was perfectly calm. I did not realize it in the least, just as a girl never realizes what it all means when she kneels before the altar as a bride, or when she stands beside the dead white face that she has loved.

After the real meaning of the thing dawned upon me and I began to comprehend that I, whose golden dreams had been quietly put aside forever, was now actually to realize those dreams, to exchange prose for poetry, and insignificance and uselessness for tremendous power such as I had always longed for, — when the possibilities of it all came over me and I saw that I could now actually build all my air castles on this earth, besides doing many other things of which I have dreamed, — it gave me at first a thorough ague fit, followed by a burning fever which nothing could allay until I had seen my will written, signed, and witnessed.

Every one thought it such an odd thing for me to think of at first. Auntie said, "Wait and take time to think it over, dear. You are laboring under a nervous strain now; wait and rest and enjoy yourself a little while. Go to Hollander's and order a fine outfit. I will help you find a French maid, for you will need one, of course; then travel after that, if you like. Take time to make up your mind. It is n't possible for you to know how to spend such an enormous sum wisely without great thought."

I could find no rest, however, until I had put beyond a peradventure the danger of my dying and leaving nothing done towards carrying out all the projects which have been so dear to me.

My will is made, and though I may change it next week, — doubtless I shall change it more than once as I get more wisdom, — I know that it is in the main as I shall let it stand.

Mr. Kilrain's partner and uncle Madison start at once for South America to look after my interests, and transfer my stocks and landed property as soon as possible into our government and railroad bonds. I cannot bear to feel that I am employing hundreds of people whom I do not know, and who may suffer from the extortion of villainous agents and overseers whom I cannot control. If I could go to South America myself, and if I understood enough of business to administer my affairs personally, I might, perhaps, do as much good by giving employment to great numbers of people there, and treating them in a helpful Christian fashion, as by anything that I can do at home.

But it would take me ten years at least to learn the language and know the people and the business merely in its outlines. My lawyers say it would require half a dozen of the shrewdest men simply to make investments and oversee the overseers, and I can foresee that a woman dependent on lawyers and agents is in no wise to be envied. So I am determined to free myself from these worries as to the details of making money, and devote my whole energies to making this fortune, which has so strangely fallen to me, tell for good in the future of our country.

I am sure that nowhere else in Christendom can money be made to produce such far-reaching results. Last night I lay awake for hours, planning this work. My mind is made up. For the next few years I shall travel and study, first, the resources and necessities of our own country, and after that the social and economic questions in the Old World. Meanwhile I shall begin to carry out some of my schemes at once, and not wait for lawyers and trustees to squabble over my money after my death.

As I am planning to leave Boston soon, I determined to meet some of the people whom I have chosen as trustees of certain funds. Accordingly I invited five people of different religious faiths, the broadest-minded and most public-spirited persons known to me, — Revs. P—— B——, A—— McK——, E. E. H——, P—— M——, and Mrs. A—— F—— P——. Not one of them had an inkling as to what it was all about, or knew who were invited beside himself. Mr. Kilrain was there in obedience to my request. I wished him to see that everything was done legally, and, besides, to draw up all the necessary papers.

I fairly shivered with delight and excitement as they came in one by one and I introduced myself to them, feeling very much like a young queen who has just ascended a throne and summons her generals and wise counselors to plan a campaign.

I had a dainty lunch served in a cosy little parlor, and as soon as the servants were gone I began, rather tremulously, it must be confessed, to make my little speech. They all knew, of course, that they were invited to give me counsel on some philanthropic matter, but further than that they were in the dark. As nearly as I can remember this is what I said: —

"You are all aware that I have asked the favor of your company to-day in order to discuss a serious matter involving the expenditure of a large sum of money. I wish to avail myself of the united wisdom of those present to enable me to use for good and not for evil the enormous wealth which has so suddenly dropped from the skies, as it were, into my hands.

"I count myself as simply a steward, and know well that before my own conscience, if before no other tribunal, I shall be called to account for my stewardship.

"It is stated that one of the seven greatest sources of pauperism in London is foolish almsgiving. I am perfectly aware that I may 'give all my goods to feed the poor,' and do more harm by it than if I threw my offerings into the Charles River.

"I am convinced that if I would help any man I must do it by giving him the means to help himself, and thus to retain or gain his self-respect.

"My thoughts and affections go out most strongly to our own country, and therefore most of my money is to be spent in it. I feel that by helping to outline the new paths which multitudes are to follow here, I shall best help the progress of humanity everywhere. But I am not so narrowminded as to think it right to wait until we get all the industrial schools and kindergartens that we need here, before we teach the first elements of decency to our brothers and sisters in Africa and every other stronghold of heathenism and savagery. My childhood was spent with earnest people who were interested in the missionary work. As a child, I read the 'Missionary Herald,' and gave my mite towards building the Morning Star.

"But of late years I have lived in a society whose sentiment has been more than half contemptuous of foreign missions. 'Let us civilize the heathen at home,' they say; 'let us do the duty that lies nearest, and not meddle with what is none of our business.'

"I am tired of this prating and ignorant talk by would-be cultured people who know nothing of the real results of missionary work. They find no fault with actresses or sea-captains or Bohemians who choose exile for gain or pleasure, but they are always ready to cry out against the folly of one who goes to teach men the alphabet, and tell women that they are something more than beasts of burden or mere child-bearing animals.

"I am constantly meeting people who talk as if Buddhism contained all that is of value in Christianity, and who actually scoff at any attempt to disturb what they call the picturesque, simple faith of their carvers of ivory bric-à-brac.

"I revere Buddha. I do not ignore the fact that in all ages God has not left himself without a witness, and that many seers and prophets have led the nations toward the light. But I prefer the sunlight to the twilight, and what vision of truth has come to me I would pass along to others. Especially do I long to help the women. Sometimes their degradation and helplessness appeals so powerfully to my imagination that I feel that I must give my money and my time without stint, until selfish, indifferent Christendom is forced to remember what is the true condition of two thirds of the world."

I was trembling all over with nervous excitement, and, as usual, was so absorbed in what I was saying as to quite forget to wonder what these five people, so much older and wiser and more experienced than I, must think of my sitting there and talking to them in this fashion. I am dreadfully afraid it must have seemed conceited or audacious or something of the sort. However, they knew nothing about me or my ideas, and as it was quite necessary that they should understand my position before they could give me any counsel, I proceeded to make it known.

"I am not content," I said, "with most methods that have been used. Sectarianism, bigotry, and ignorance have often perverted the best results. The good souls who fear to send a preacher, no matter how devoted, unless he preach exactly their 'ism,' seem to me to be retarding by many years the consummation so devoutly to be wished. The most Christlike men whom I know could not be sent out as missionaries by the American Board. I believe there are hundreds of ardent young souls who would be led to offer themselves for work in foreign lands if the restrictions of creed did not stand in the way.

"Do not misunderstand me. I do not condemn creeds. Doubtless every one who thinks must have some kind of a creed, however short it be. But in the making of bequests, in endowments which are to help affect the thought of future generations, it seems to me difficult to avoid ultimate lawsuits, temptation to mental dishonesty, and infinite harm, unless the founder works on the broadest principles and sees the work begun in his lifetime.

"I have written my will this week and have devoted a very large sum of money for the establishment of a fund, the amount of which I shall not at present name, to be used as follows: —

"For the management and expenditure of this fund I have chosen five trustees. These shall fill vacancies in their number as they occur from death, resignation, incapacity, or whatever cause. One member, at least, shall always be a woman, and as many as three Christian denominations shall always be represented among the five trustees.

"The fund shall be called the 'Christian Missionary Fund,' and the work shall be, so far as the trustees are concerned, entirely unsectarian, though always distinctly Christian and Protestant.

"The fund shall be devoted to the following purposes:

"First, for promoting the spiritual and mental, and thus indirectly the material, welfare of the most helpless and degraded people on the globe.

"Second, for promoting Christianity and education in lands like Japan, where there is already an awakened aspiration for better things, and hence the most immediate results may be anticipated.

"Third, for promoting such measures as shall diminish the slave-trade wherever it exists, and for preventing the liquor traffic between civilized and barbarous nations, for instance, such as is now disgracing and desolating the Congo State.

"Any man or woman who applies to be sent out as preacher, teacher, or agent, for promoting any of these ends, shall be accepted if he or she give satisfactory evidence to the committee of being fitted to do sufficiently helpful work in the positions to which they are assigned. No acceptation of any creed shall be required of any applicant. After being enrolled for the work, however, all shall be required to leave detailed written statements of their religious beliefs. These are to be kept on file for statistical purposes, together with the records of the subsequent work of the candidates, their methods of labor, and the results accomplished.

"Every woman employed by the trustees shall receive the same salary as a man would receive for doing the same work. In sending out preachers and pastors no distinction shall be made in regard to sex. All women desiring to preach and to administer the sacraments shall be authorized to do so if possessed of proper qualifications."

In regard to that latter clause I had had considerable discussion with auntie previous to convening the trustees.

"Is n't that a little odd?" she asked. "I am afraid some clergymen would be shocked at that."

"Aunt Madison," I said, "if it is desirable to have the sacraments of communion or baptism celebrated at all, I can see no reason why they cannot be done by a woman's hand as well as by that of a man? If the hand that made the bread does not desecrate it, why may not that same hand break and pass it, provided it be done in a proper spirit? Is a man's hand any more sacred than a woman's?"

"Oh, it is n't that," said auntie, fidgeting a little; "but it is the words and the service which go with it, of course."

"Certainly," said I, — rather bluntly, too, I am afraid, — "and those words consist of quotations from the words of Christ and Paul, and a prayer. I see no reason why quotations and prayer uttered by a female voice may not be just as acceptable to the Almighty as if spoken by a male voice. (I hate those words 'male' and 'female,' but I thought it would help her to see the absurdity of our conventional notions about such things."

"Well, dear, perhaps so, if you look at it that way," she said; "but what do you think the apostles would have thought of such a thing?"

"As a matter of fact," said I, "the members of the early church, who ate at one table, and had all things in common, and celebrated their Lord's death at the close of their meal in the simplest way in the world, probably passed the cup from one to the other informally, and women as well as men took part in what little service there was. It seems to me in this age of common sense on other subjects it is time we had a little more of it in religion."

How saucy that appears as I write it. I wonder if I am getting dictatorial.

I told the trustees, that, although their work as trustees was to be entirely undenominational, and that they were to discourage any sectarian work in whatever schools and churches might be established, this was not to be interpreted to mean a refusal to send good men and women, even if they held narrow sectarian views. I hold myself too liberal to refuse to send any one who can do any good, even though he hold mediæval views on eschatology. If a man can persuade a savage to wash his face and stop beating his wife, I am willing to allow him his cassock and crucifix and all the joys of a celibate High Churchism, so long, at least, as he holds himself responsible to no other body than the committee of my choosing. I have observed that a fair amount of civilization, intelligence, and real Christianity can co-exist with a very crude theology. So any good man who cares enough about helping his fellow-men to work hard on a moderate salary, as an exile in a heathen land, shall not be hindered from going until enough better men offer themselves to take his place.

I told my guests that I wished to begin the work at once. Without stating whether or not they were the trustees referred to in my will, I asked them to assume for the next three years the responsibility of disbursing two hundred thousand dollars annually in the way I had specified. I shall keep the money in my own hands so that they need not be troubled about investments, and shall pay the amount in installments, as they call for it.

I requested them to do exactly as they thought best, without any more reference to me than if I were dead, except when they came to any misunderstanding in regard to the interpretation of my wishes as expressed above.

I shall have accurate reports of their proceedings, and thus be able to rectify any point that is left obscure, or that is capable of abuse.

I requested that my name should not be made known in connection with all this.

When I had finished there was a pause; then Dr. H—— in his genial way began — But I can write no more to-night.

(Extract from an editorial in the "Church Inquisitor.")

It is with feelings of mingled interest and alarm that we report as the most notable of recent events in the religious world the announcement of an enormous bequest for foreign missionary work.

"Why alarm?" may be asked. But a careful reading of the provisions of the bequest which we publish in another column will assure the reader that the conditions under which it is given are unprecedented and allow possibilities so dangerous as to create great anxiety in the minds of those who are well grounded in the faith and zealous for the maintenance of pure doctrine. As it is needless to say that in matters of such moment we hold that the most stringent regulations and careful scrutiny should be exercised, it is evident that the utter abolishing of all tests, allowing the teaching of the most dangerous heresies by Unitarians, Universalists, Spiritualists, Christian Scientists and what not,—and this to be done in the name of Christian Missions,—is startling, to say the least.

It will be readily seen that to the mind of the untutored savage unable to distinguish genuine Christianity from that which is spurious, and as likely to accept the one as the other, the danger of confounding the two to the discredit of all true piety will be great, if the restrictions laid down in the bequest are to be binding.

To be sure, the men and women sent out by this fund must be presumed to possess a fair amount of intellect and moral character, though how their spiritual condition is to be ascertained before hearing a statement of their creed we fail to see. Doubtless something may be done in the way of building up schools and supplementing the work of those whom our Board sends to preach the gospel. For this we rejoice and give thanks. Knowing the genuine Christian character of some members of the committee, we are led to hope that they will deem no one fit to send out as a proclaimer of the doctrines of Christianity who holds the evidently loose views of the framer of this singular bequest. As only one of the trustees is a Unitarian, and as Unitarians are proverbially indifferent to foreign missions, it seems to leave considerable ground for the hope that none of that sect will apply, or, if applying, will be sent.

The donor's name is withheld, but it is shrewdly surmised to be the late Mr. Albert Danforth of Springfield, formerly a noted Free-thinker, but who is said to have had a deathbed repentance and to have attempted to appease his conscience by bestowing his vast wealth in the manner described. In this case why his name should be withheld remains a mystery.

It will be noticed that another peculiar feature of the bequest is that one trustee at least shall always be a woman. In the course of time there is nothing to prevent all of them being women, as four of the five appointed are known to be in favor of female suffrage. As the late Mr. Danforth, among his other radical notions, held the same unscriptural view of woman's functions, the promotion of "women's rights" views by the endowment in question is to be feared.

It is, perhaps, well enough to pay women in the mission field the same sum as that given to men for the same work, though this possibly would be too attractive an allurement for some unworthy persons who might assume the sacred duties in question for the sake of the loaves and fishes. But what seems especially unwise as well as wholly unscriptural, and of which we feel compelled to assert our disapproval, is the provision that women shall be permitted to administer the holy sacraments. See Corinthians i. 14, 34, and xi. 3, 7.

There seems to be no serious objection to women preaching to assemblies of their own sex where male missionaries cannot be admitted; but that such an extreme step should be taken as to desecrate and turn into a farce the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper by allowing them to be administered by a woman, is something that we must deplore.

Were it not that most of the trustees appointed represent the new school of thought, which seems to rely more on reason than on the Written Word, we should wonder at their being able to satisfy their consciences if they accept responsibilities encumbered by such restrictions.

CHAPTER V.

LETTER TO AN INTIMATE FRIEND.

Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, *February* —, 18—.

My dear Alice, — I ran away from Boston without saying good-by to you. Dr. Wesselhoeft predicted all sorts of horrors — hysterics, St. Vitus's dance, nervous prostration, and I don't know what else, if I did not at once get away from the hosts of people who drove me distracted with an incessant ringing of the door-bell from breakfast until bedtime. I was not aware that I had so many friends before. Every pupil I have ever had, every passing acquaintance even, has felt it to be his or her privilege and duty to call and congratulate me and bore me to death with their ecstasies and flatteries.

I rather liked it at first, I must confess. It was all so novel to me, and it showed some of my acquaintances in an entirely new light, which, I found, gave me an admirable opportunity for a study of character on its drollest side. Whenever I entered the reception room and found it lined with callers waiting all on tiptoe for my appearance, I really felt like a president beset by office-seekers during his first month at the White House.

But a few days of all this rather nauseated me, and I thanked my fortune that it had not come at my birth, but had allowed me to make many true and tried friends before bestowing on me what I fear will now always make me suspicious of a lack of disinterestedness in every new-comer.

However, in leaving Boston and coming to New York I fancy that I have only jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire, for letters pursue me everywhere. I devote every forenoon to reading them and dictating replies to my amanuensis. Many of them are applications for money or help of some sort, some of them outrageous, and some very pitiful indeed. I had one some days ago from a poor fellow in Vermont, who fancied himself an inventor. He had just lost his wife and two children, and implored me to "help him make a man" of the only little one left to him. His letter sounded so forlorn that it went to my heart, so I sent telegrams of inquiry about him to the postmaster and the minister in his native town. They answered my questions satisfactorily, and I sent at once for the man to come.

Such a dazed, bewildered-looking creature as he was, to be sure, when he stepped out of the carriage, which I had sent for him, and stumbled clumsily up the steps with his baby, tied up in an old red shawl, in his arms!

He told me the simple story of his life, its little ambitions and narrow outlook; of his conversion and his courtship, and of the horrors of disease and death and poverty, to which his pinched face and trembling hands bore witness. The boy was a pathetic little morsel of humanity, and his sad little mouth won my heart. I have taken charge of the child, and, please God, I will "make a man of him." The father is quite unfit for hard work, and what to do with him I did not know, when suddenly I bethought myself of a magazine article which you loaned me some time ago, apropos of "A Universal Tinker." The man is clever with tools, I hear, and just the one to do odd bits of mending and attending to the thousand and one things which are always getting out of order about a house. So I sent him with a letter to all my Back Bay friends, and eight of them have offered to pay him five dollars a month each, on condition that he keep everything in their establishments in repair. I have given him a chest of tools, and have found a good home for him. A widow in straitened circumstances, whom also I wish to help, but who will not accept charity, is glad to receive him and his child into her family. Really, the man seems already like another creature. He has taken on a new look of self-respect and courage that makes his commonplace, weather-beaten face fairly radiant.

This whole experience has given me intense satisfaction. I had almost made up my mind to pay no heed to these calls, which demand so much of my time and prove, at least half of them, to come from frauds and impostors. In fact, it was merely as an experiment, and chiefly to indulge my curiosity, that I heeded this case. I am now determined to have every appeal for help that seems at all deserving thoroughly investigated, and I foresee that I shall be obliged to have more than one agent to attend to it all.

I had an extraordinary experience last night, of which I must tell you, though my ears tingle yet at the thought of it. I wonder if this is a foretaste of the penalties which I am doomed to pay for the sin of being a great heiress. I had always wondered how rich women could endure to make such a display of diamonds at parties and balls as to necessitate their being dogged by private detectives everywhere. I always maintained that a woman was an idiot who would thus let herself become such a slave to her wealth. I was sure that any one who lived simply, and did not care for show, could go alone where she pleased, and have no fears; but my theories are getting sadly shaken. However, I am digressing. Now about this affair last night.

I received a beautifully written note the other day, delicately perfumed, and bearing a seal stamped with a coat of arms, and signed Manuel Altiova. The writer intimated that he had been a friend of Mr. Dunreath, and had matters of importance to tell me. He begged the favor of an interview. I surmised that he was a scamp, but, on the other hand, thought it possible that he might be some titled wealthy Spaniard who had met Mr. Dunreath in South America, and who could give me some information about the locality of my possessions. So I had my amanuensis send him a formal note in reply asking him to call on me last evening.

I told my maid Hélène to remain in the next room with the door ajar, and when his card was sent up, followed almost immediately by himself, I arose to receive him with some curiosity.

Tableau. Enter, with many bows, a tall, black-eyed man of perhaps thirty-five, clad in faultless dress; in short, to all outward appearance, an elegant Adonis.

I let him tell his story, and said nothing for awhile. He professed to have been most intimately acquainted with Mr. Dunreath, and produced a photograph of him. Subsequently, he showed me some letters in Mr. Dunreath's handwriting referring to some dishonorable business transactions by which Mr. D. had greatly augmented his fortunes, and for which he would have suffered the full penalty of the law except for the timely and most self-sacrificing intervention of his "noble and devoted friend," Manuel Altiova.

I was thunderstruck. The hot blood mounted to my temples, and for a moment everything seemed to reel before me. Was all my happiness a dream? Was I then enjoying the ill-gotten gains of a swindler? I looked at the letters. There could be no mistake about the handwriting. That very forenoon, with my lawyer, I had been carefully examining a dozen documents in that same queer crabbed hand, which I had known so well in the days when I was a girl and had a lover.

Five years ago it was, but it seemed fifty, as I sat there staring dizzily at those letters and trying to realize that this man whom I had loved almost enough to marry, this man whom I would have sworn was honor itself, was false, basely false. Oh, it seemed a thing incredible; yet, as I thought of how in these last few years for month after month society has been shocked by the fall of those who have stood most high in our esteem, yet who have been tempted to sell their souls for gold, I believed it all.

I remember thinking vaguely of how I must try to find out the men whom Mr. Dunreath had defrauded, and return to them this money, which was theirs, not mine. Then I roused myself and questioned him, trying to appear as indifferent and non-committal as possible, though I could feel my temples throbbing, and I knew my cheeks were hot. He answered my questions without the slightest hesitation, giving names, dates, and localities with startling readiness and apparent sincerity. He mentioned various little peculiarities of Mr. Dunreath's, — his never eating butter, his being left-handed, and so on.

At last I could ask no more. I felt as though I should suffocate. The man went on talking, however, telling his own family history. His father was a learned professor, his mother a lady of noble birth. He was born at Barcelona, had been destined from childhood to take orders in the Romish Church, and was finally disinherited by his stern father for his avowed Protestant and Republican doctrines, to say nothing of his refusal to wed the woman of his father's choice when all hope of his entering the church had been abandoned. With his own little private fortune of twenty thousand dollars he had sailed for Brazil, and had entered the service of Mr. Dunreath. Soon he became the devoted friend of that gentleman, was intrusted with his confidence, and became cognizant of all his affairs. Mr. Dunreath had fully expected to return to him the thousands which he had so generously made over to the officials in the nick of time, thus preventing the pursuit which would have ended in his arrest and conviction, with the subsequent surrender to the state of many of his millions.

Mr. Altiova, or rather Señor as he called himself, presently let me understand the chief purpose of his visit. As you will readily guess, he desired me to pay him the sum which he had spent, namely, twenty thousand dollars, all his little fortune. In another letter which he produced, Mr. Dunreath had promised to return this sum doubled, and this promise was in the act of fulfillment on the very day of the fatal sunstroke.

Señor Altiova modestly disclaimed any desire that this generous offer should be fulfilled by Mr. Dunreath's heirs, and declared that he would be quite content to receive only the sum which he had spent. He paused for my reply. Meanwhile I had been gradually collecting my wits, and was able to control my voice enough to say that I must first consult with my lawyer.

"But, Miss Brewster," he urged, "that, you see, is impossible. Will you disclose Mr. Dunreath's felony? Will you create a needless scandal and lose your fortune? No; if you will but settle this little business with me (the sum, of course, is but a mere bagatelle to a rich lady like you), the secret will remain forever buried in my bosom, and no mortal shall know what has passed between us. The moment you hand me your check for twenty thousand dollars, payable to the bearer, that moment you shall with your own hand burn these incriminating letters."

I reiterated that in spite of the danger of bringing ignominy upon the name of my old friend, I should consult my lawyer before taking any steps in the matter.

"But I can't wait," he retorted almost fiercely, and there was a look in his eyes which made me start. My heart rose. Could it be that those terrible letters were only clever forgeries? He instantly recollected himself, however, and his tone assumed a touch of pathos.

"Miss Brewster," he said, and there was a tremor in his voice as he looked at me beseechingly; "my mother, whom I have not seen for years, is dying. The physician gives her at most only a month to live. Unknown to my father she has cabled me to return instantly. Ah, my sweet mother," he murmured, as if speaking to himself, while his eyes were wet with unshed tears, "the moments are years until I see her. Oh, if I should be too late! And then — who knows? perhaps, — yes, — perhaps, if I may stand beside my mother's deathbed, my stern old father may be reconciled to me — may bid me stay, and I may have the unspeakable comfort of sustaining his declining years."

I watched him keenly. If this were acting, it had been very good acting until now. But these last few words had a false ring in them, which even my unpracticed ear detected. With a mournful sigh he showed me two miniatures painted on ivory, one the face of a handsome, dark-eyed woman, the other that of a scholarly-looking man of middle age. These, he said, were the portraits of his father and mother, and as he returned the latter to its velvet case he pressed it tenderly to his lips.

It was very touching, and I was half convinced, especially when my eye fell again on that curious handwriting whose peculiarities I knew so well. The man evidently saw that I was agitated and afraid that his story might, after all, be true. He continued: —

"But, Miss Brewster, I have no money. I arrived here last week from Rio Janeiro. My father has disinherited me, as I have told you. My little private fortune, my mother's gift, which I could have doubled in a year's time by my investments, was all given to save my friend. Madame!" he cried, "where is your sense of justice — simple justice — if you refuse me the paltry sum which saved the reputation and wealth of the man whose heiress you now are? You have his own confession here before you, signed with his name. The evidence is unimpeachable. If I bring it into court, it may cost you half your millions. Madame, the Urania sails to-morrow, I must go. I must have money, the money you owe me. If you refuse" —

I rose to bring this extraordinary interview to an immediate close. I was shaking from head to foot and thankful beyond measure that Hélène, who had doubtless heard the whole conversation, understood too little English to realize its import. I was convinced that I had to deal with a very shrewd, clever villain, who had worked up his facts most adroitly, and was trying a desperate confidence game. But he was not to be gotten rid of so easily. Suddenly falling upon one knee, he grasped my hand as I stood before him and poured out a torrent of words, of which I remember nothing, for I was too indignant and astounded even to think of calling upon Hélène. We must have looked for all the world like the tragic pictures in the "Police Gazette," which my naughty youngsters used to display behind my back at the Mission School.

Suddenly I came to my senses. I don't suppose the whole scene lasted half a minute at most. Tearing my hand away, I was rushing for Hélène, — who, as I learned afterward, was sound asleep, with the door blown to, — when, as a last bit of desperation, what did this man do, but snatch a dainty little pistol from his hip pocket, and before I could scream or even gasp an articulate word he aimed it at his temples and seemed about to fire. I can hardly tell what I did then. I believe I screamed, and I must have rushed upon the madman, for the next instant I found myself with the pistol in my hand trying to fire it up the chimney, while the Señor lay prostrate apparently in a swoon. But the pistol would not fire; evidently it was not loaded. I dropped it into the smouldering ashes, and staggered into the next room, where my stupid maid lay soundly sleeping on the sofa. Faint and trembling I dropped into the nearest chair. I could not have walked six inches further, and was too weak to attempt to arouse Hélène. On the whole, I was glad not to do so, for she would have been too frightened to be of the least use. Moreover, she would have raised the neighborhood with her shrieks, while I should have been ready to die with mortification and disgust.

In imagination I saw the lurid head lines of the next day's columns of society gossip and scandal. "Dunreath's Defalcation!" "How it Horrifies His Heiress!!" I saw myself posing as the heroine of a sixth-rate dime novel; on whose pages alone, as I had always supposed, such experiences as this ever took place. It did not take three seconds for all this to flash through my brain and make the cold sweat stand out in drops upon my forehead.

Just then I heard a faint click, and summoning courage to look into the drawing-room, what was my unutterable relief to find the room empty. The wretch had vanished. To tell the truth, at that juncture I came about as near verifying the doctor's prediction in regard to hysterics as I ever did in my life.

Now for the sequel. This afternoon I received the following note, which I inclose for your benefit.

MISS BREWSTER.

MADAM, — John I. Carrigain, alias Count Peperino, alias Dr. Kametski, alias Manuel Altiova, aged thirty-four years and seven months, was born in Manchester, England, of an English father and Portuguese mother, received a good education, was arrested for forgery at the age of nineteen, served out a sentence of five years, and on release was sent to New York by a charitable agency. He was suspected of being accessory to one of the largest swindling operations ever undertaken in New York city, but as nothing could be proved, he was released from custody and began operations in Chicago, obtaining money under various false pretences. At first he met with great success, but was finally convicted and sentenced to six years in the state prison. He was released from Joliet six months ago, but, until your communication last night, had not been known to be in New York. A person answering his description was seen to take the northern express last evening with a ticket for some point in Canada. The man is a clever forger, and it would require an expert to detect his work. It has been ascertained that Carrigain was assistant clerk for Mr. Dunreath for a few months seven years ago, which accounts for some of his information regarding the habits of that gentleman; and as for the handwriting and the South American details, he is quite clever enough to have worked those carefully up in the last few weeks.

It is needless to say that his career will henceforth be closely watched.

Yours respectfully,
J. ALLISON,
Pinkerton Detective.

By the way, Alice, I am having my portrait painted, full-length, in a blue velvet tea gown. I give a sitting every other afternoon, and on alternate days visit tenement houses, industrial schools, and Castle Garden. I saw two thousand filthy Italians of the lowest kind land yesterday.

I have just come home from a tour through the Mulberry Bend where these creatures herd together. I felt as if I were in Naples again. I thought some parts of Boston were bad enough, but I never saw anything on this side of the water equal to the horrible squalor and loathsomeness of these places.

I mean to take all your good advice about being calm, and trying not to feel that it devolves upon me to settle all our social problems this month. I know even better than you the complexity of the difficulties in our congested city life. I have little hope of doing much for this generation of pauperism and vice, but I am determined to do whatever my money and good will can do for laying the foundation of better things in the generation to come.

I am going to begin with tenement houses, for there, I believe, lies the root of half of the trouble. I suppose my friends will think that I am getting to be a dreadful doctrinaire. Well, it can't be helped. I was predestined for that, I believe. My consolation is that you at least will not be bored by all my plans and theories, and will warn me if I get too rabid. . . .

CHAPTER VI.

The night after I had first seen Mildred Brewster at aunt Madison's I lay awake for hours, feverishly tossing upon my pillow, and revolving many thoughts. I then made one resolve. I would try to win the friendship of this woman who had touched me, who had moved me in a way that no one had ever done before.

It was not so much by what she had said, for I had heard the same or kindred thoughts expressed by other lips; but I had never before met a woman so strong, well poised and thoughtful, a woman who united girlish grace and charm with all the persistent ardor of one who, I was sure, could not only die for an idea, but, what is far rarer, live for it day by day and year by year, although forced to meet indifference and coldness or the quiet contempt which cuts to the quick in every sensitive nature.

As I had sat by the firelight that night, watching the color come and go in her face, — that changeful, eager face, — for the first time in a dreary twelvemonth I had felt my heart leap up with warmth and sympathy. From a thoughtless, happy girlhood, from the life of a gay, pleasure-loving young lady, I had been rudely summoned to face some of the bitterest realities of life. No matter what they were. I am not writing about myself. But though my life was still rich and full of opportunities, if I had but known it, yet in my blindness and selfishness it had seemed utterly wrecked to me. I had sunk into a dull, prosaic routine, and under a proud mask of gay indifference was trying to hide a heart dead to hope, ambition, and love. Yet, no! not dead to love, though I had thought it so; but in the heart-hunger which was not satisfied, I was fast becoming self-centred, cold, and cynical.

Like a dreary desert the long years which must be lived stretched desolately before me, and my only aim was to fill the minutes of each day so full as to leave me no leisure for memory or thought.

As I closed my eyes to sleep that night my last thought was, "Yes, I *will* know her. I *must* know her. Oh, if I could only be like her, a creature of thought and purpose, absorbed in some idea, caring for something beside my wretched, silly self! Perhaps she can help me. I will ask her. I can trust *her*."

I had been deceived in others; I had given my utmost trust to those who had proved utterly unworthy, and in bitterness of spirit I had resolved never to trust again, never to leave the gateway to my heart unguarded; but now, before I knew it, the locks had yielded, and I stood with lonely, outstretched arms, begging for love to enter in. After all, I was still young, and very, very human.

And love came. It came before my fallen pride had found words to ask for it. I had something to live for now. *I had found a friend.* What romance has ever been written that tells of woman's love for woman? And yet the world is full of it, despite the skeptics, and the Davids and Jonathans find their counterparts in thousands of the unwritten lives of women. Yes, I had found not a new acquaintance, but a warm heart-friend. Thank God that she knew it and I knew it before the wealth which came so fast upon the beginning of our friendship could create a gulf between us, which, once established, my pride would never have allowed me to cross. Mildred knew, she always knew, that I had loved her first, and wanted her for herself alone.

I knew, when the wealth came, that it would not make her any the less my friend, but I was only one among her many friends. I knew that our paths would be different now, and though she would always think kindly of me, I could not expect to see and know her as I had fondly dreamed in the first days of our friendship.

"No, I can never return to her what she can give, what she has already given to me; my little life can play but a small part in the large life that has come to her," I said drearily, as I turned back, after the first shock of surprise, to readjust myself to the old routine of thought and feeling, which, I had dared to hope, had been put behind me forever.

"Ah, well, I have made believe be happy before, I can do so again," I said to myself, grimly.

But one day — how well I remember it — as I passed down Chestnut Street in Salem noting the brilliant winter sunlight shining down from the cloudless blue through the black lace work of branches high arching overhead, and casting fantastic shadows on the brick walls of the stately old mansions on either side, some one handed me a letter. This is what it said: —

. . . "You asked me to be your friend, you said I could help you, and now I ask you to be my friend, to come here to this great city where I must be for a time and help me. I felt brave and strong at first, I was not afraid to be rich, but I begin to tremble now, to feel strangely weak and girlish and unprotected; to feel, in short, that I need a friend, that I need what I think you can be to me. After aunt Madison had been with me only a few days she was obliged to return to Boston, leaving me quite alone. Of course Madam Grundy says that I must have a chaperon, but I do not want a chaperon, and I should be wretched with a 'companion,' perfunctorily trying to entertain me, learning all my plans and secrets, and hypocritically assenting to everything I do and say. No; I want an honest friend, one who knows the world as you do, who will honestly speak her mind, who will take an interest in all my schemes, and help to keep me from making blunders.

"I believe I could talk more freely, think more clearly, and do better work if you were beside me, your honest eyes looking into mine. For, let me tell you the secret, dear, of what first drew me to you. You are most strangely like the sister whom I lost years ago, and whose companionship, if she had lived, would have made life so rich for me. I feel myself so alone; never before have I had so keen a sense of loneliness as now, here, in this modern Babylon, with my old life and work abandoned, and the new perplexing life which my wealth has brought me just begun. Like me, you are alone in the world, singularly alone; so come and be to me what my little Ruby would have been. When you speak I could almost believe that I hear her voice; when you look at me I see her eyes again. Your face haunts me. Come to me and I shall feel that my Ruby is with me again."

Standing in the sunshine beneath the old elms I read these loving words. When I lifted my eyes again, the beautiful quaint old street was suddenly transfigured. For months it had been to me but a bare prison-house; now the sunshine was real sunshine, the sky was no longer leaden, the world was, after all, a beautiful world, and I was glad to live.

So bidding farewell to quiet Chestnut Street and the staid, historic old city, I went to the "modern Babylon" to meet Mildred, and the new life began. As the days went on I perceived that she seemed to have a feverish dread that she should die with her work undone. My constant anxiety was that she would succumb to the fearful nervous strain which her sudden accession to wealth and responsibility had brought upon her. But nothing seemed to rest her or relieve her mind except the accomplishment of some of the ends she had in view, and as every new project was consummated, she showed a relief and delight that to the average society woman would have appeared inexplicable and at the same time amusing.

"It seems to me," said Mildred one day as we were strolling through the park, after a morning on Cherry Street; "it seems to me that most people have no imagination. It cannot be that all the pleasant, cultured people whom one meets are so shamefully heartless and indifferent. They simply have not the smallest realization of what is going on in this great city, or any thought of their personal, individual responsibility about it. They hear it all as a tale that is told. They have always heard it. They are used to hearing it. From constant hearing it has become as meaningless to them as the Lord's Prayer has to most people. How many who dare to say 'Thy kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven,' ever actually mean a word that they say, or lift a finger to bring it about?"

We walked on in silence. Presently Mildred burst out again:

"We are so apt to think that because *we* eat our three meals a day, and can buy our opera tickets when we feel like it, that all the world is doing well, and that if people are miserable it must somehow be their own fault.

"I am convinced that if any people ever needed missionary work, it is the society belles and the well-bred, cultured men of the clubs, who know so little and care still less for this vast multitude of the ignorant and suffering and fallen here at their very doors, and who look with calm indifference on these hideous sores upon our modern life.

"I promise you, Ruby, after I get some of my irons out of the fire, I mean to devote myself to a crusade to rescue what George Eliot calls the 'perishing upper classes.'

"But ah," she sighed, "it needs genius for that, and I have only money. Oh, I would give half my millions if I had the scathing pen of a Carlyle, or the power to plead for humanity like Mrs. Stowe or Walter Besant or Dickens; if I could stir the hearts of the people with flaming words that should help to sweep away the sloth, indifference, and contemptible arrogance that makes one tenth of us forget that the other nine tenths are our brothers and sisters!"

"If every one were as self-sacrificing as you, Mildred"—I began; but she interrupted me almost sternly.

"Hush! never say that to me. What have I ever sacrificed? Nothing, absolutely nothing. I have always had comforts; now I have everything that heart can wish. In giving to others I deny myself nothing. Never dare to let me for a moment imagine that I am doing anything more than the simplest, most obvious duty. I must not cheat my conscience. I should be the veriest hypocrite if I allowed myself to think that I am generous. Is there anything generous in paying one's debts, particularly when one has not had to earn the money with which to pay them?

"I have always observed," she continued, "that a little decency in a millionaire goes a long way. I am not above temptation, and I have already discovered that I am in danger of coming to believe that my simple good will, common sense, and capacity for sympathy are something rare and remarkable.

"Every one thinks to please me by telling me so. Do not let me deceive myself. I have a clear vision now; help me to keep it and to be faithful."

Mildred's voice quivered, and she drew my arm in hers while we walked back to our rooms in silence.

"But the world is growing better, Mildred. Every intelligent person admits that people are more kind and thoughtful than they used to be. No one who has read history could deny it," I resumed, as once more within doors we sat down before the glowing grate to finish our talk.

"You and I believe it, dear, because we believe in God, and because we believe that this is God's world and not the devil's," Mildred replied.

"Half the women whom we saw parading their fine toilets this afternoon believe it too, not because they know enough about history to see in it the unfolding of the divine idea, but because they like to believe it; because it makes them very comfortable to believe that by taking money which some one else has earned and paying an annual fee out of it to orphan asylums and hospitals, or to any outcome of our modern altruism, they are thereby relieved from all further responsibility.

"But here is an intelligent man, — an English university man, who has read history as well as you and I, and he says it is false. This is what he writes," said Mildred, taking a thick letter from her writing-desk. She held it unopened for a moment and continued: "I met him when I was in England. We had many a talk in our rambles together at Kew and Hampstead Heath. He is a friend of William Morris and like him a socialist of the deepest dye. I don't half accept the accuracy of all his statements, but he is an honest man and a gentleman. I am glad to know him, for I cannot afford to be ignorant of such a man's views on our social problems, however much I may dissent from them. Now let me read you his letter.

. . . "You ask me to give you suggestions for the expenditure of your wealth in benefiting humanity. This I must decline to do, my dear friend. If I had your wealth I know what *I* should do, or, at least, what I ought to do, but *I* am a socialist, and *you* are not. I do not believe in *laissez-faire* as you do, and as a socialist I should use my wealth and influence for a reorganization of society, not for a patching up of what is at bottom false and rotten. Things are getting worse and worse, and must continue to do so under the present social system. My hope is that they will get so bad, so unutterably vile, that the people will be compelled to throw aside their apathy and make a clean sweep. I take no part in any of the hundred little schemes for 'improving' the present system. I don't want to improve the present system as you do. I want to destroy it.

"We improve things that are already fairly good and can be made better, but we destroy whatever is thoroughly rotten; at least I think all rational people do so. So far as the present order is at all bearable, it is due to certain socialist innovations, such as interference with the capitalist, trade unions, movements like that of the Irish against the particular class of thieves called landlords, etc.

"The people, the common people, who for centuries have silently suffered and abjectly kissed the foot that kicked them and trod upon them, the people, I say, are beginning to wake up. They are beginning to ask questions, and they are questions which will have to be solved erelong, even if it take another bloody French revolution to do it. I see no way in which bloodshed is to be avoided. I look forward confidently to what will seem to you very like a reign of terror ere this century closes. Things must grow worse before they can get better. The crisis has not come, but it is coming. Money has done much, but it cannot do everything; the press will not always be bribed and muzzled as it is to-day, nor Levi's and Mulhall's and Giffen's statistics be doctored to suit the capitalists who pay for them. The time is coming, Miss Brewster, when the people *will be heard ;* and *they will be heeded*, for their words will be as short and sharp as fire and dynamite can make them.

"Do not think I am telling you of what I wish to see. I am telling you of what I know will come.

"The rich are not voluntarily going to heed the bitter cry of the famishing, except in one way, the only way they have ever known, namely, almsgiving. They will give alms because it is noble to be a benefactor, because it appeases their consciences, because it might be made extremely inconvenient for them if they did not. But they will not give justice. Justice! they never learned the meaning of the word.

"But some day these landed aristocrats 'whose thin bloods crawl down from some robber in a border brawl,' who have never lifted their finger to earn a penny in their lives, and who owe all that they have to these same robber ancestors, — these people, I say, will some day be taught the meaning of that same word 'justice' by some of the forty-five millions of landless people in our little island. I shall not soon forget how quickly the subscriptions for the poor went up a year or two ago, after the riots.

"You have no conception, Miss Brewster, you can have no conception, of the state of things here at present. Six millions of our people are living on the brink of pauperism. I tell you, when I sit down to my omelette and toast in the morning and reflect that there are two hundred thousand human beings within two miles of me who don't know where they are going to get their next meal, when I read of the hundreds of children who habitually go to school without any breakfast, and who not unfrequently faint dead away over their books, I tell you it does n't make my own breakfast relish any better.

"One night in the autumn, a year or two ago, I passed through Trafalgar Square at twelve o'clock, and counted four hundred and eighty-three homeless people lying out in the chill air upon the bare stones. Not one of them had fourpence wherewith to pay for a night's lodging. And this, remember, was only one spot.

"There were many others where a similar sight might have been seen.

"'Ah,' but you say; 'these are the dissolute and drunken, those who love to be vagabonds.'

"I assure you that you are much mistaken. I have seen and talked with thousands of these people, and a large number of them, probably a fourth, are men from the country who can find no work there, and have found none here — honest, hard-working British laborers. Two thirds of these people are not vicious, or drunken, but they are out of work, they are cold, they are hungry, they are naked, they are outcasts in this Christian (?) land which has enough for all its children. All they ask is work, hard work, dirty work, work for twelve hours a day, but that they cannot get. Why? Because our accursed modern society is irrational, wasteful, utterly selfish.

Plenty of money, plenty of things worth doing, plenty of men who would thank God if this work could be given them to do; but what does our mad, maladjusted society say to them? 'Emigrate! Clear the country! Away with you! We have no use for you.' Malthus was right, after all, and we must reverse Browning.

'There 's no God in heaven;
All 's wrong with the world.'

"Do you know of the blacksmith women in the 'black country'? I have recently been there, giving some addresses. Oh, the hideousness of it all, with its starving people, its wretched, stunted lives, its ghastly ugliness, its brutalized men and women! One sees women, who should be at home nursing their babies, standing on their feet from morning till night doing the work of men, swinging the hammer amidst grime and soot and incessant noise. And if one of them drops at her post from sheer exhaustion, there is a fiendish clanging thing that bangs on the floor and shakes every bone in the poor wretch's body.

"Mr. —— took Henry George to see the sight when he was here, and he told me that George swore until he was black in the face.

"Oh, I know you think I am a hot-head; you will say these are exceptional cases. You will doubtless try to do what all the good rich people do (I admit, you see, that there are *some* good ones); you will doubtless try to help palliate all these horrors. If you were here you might build an old men's home for the poor men to whom society has never given a chance, who, through no fault of their own, have been forced from their cradle to live in stifling attics or damp, unwholesome hovels, breathing poison, working their fingers off to give their hungry children bread. You might build a comfortable home where these decrepit, useless old fellows might enjoy the food which you give in charity, wear your charity uniform, and look forward to filling a pauper's grave, as does one in nine of all the people who die in London. Or you might build a splendid marble palace of a hospital or asylum, and herd together vast numbers of little boys or fallen women or cripples, and try in some big, mechanical, institutional way to do with your pound of cure what an ounce of prevention would have accomplished a thousand times better, if it could have come in the way of justice, not charity. Charity! how I loathe the word! It is the iron which sears the conscience of your rich Christian as does nothing else. He thinks to buy heaven with that word.

"I tell you, Miss Brewster, these people want what you and I want. They want to preserve their self-respect, to have a chance once a week to remember that they are human beings and not machines. They want to be able in this Christian land to earn an honest living, to keep their daughters from the streets, and to keep soul and body together without sacrificing all decency and honor.

"How much delicacy and fine moral sentiment, to say nothing of physical comfort, do you suppose is to be had in the sixty thousand families of London, each of which lives in one room?

"Do you rich people suppose you are going to help this matter greatly by leaving money in your wills to build asylums for the moral and physical wrecks for which our incredible folly and selfish indifference is responsible?

"Your time will come; sooner or later you will find much the same condition of things in your own great cities. Do not believe that in some mysterious way — as your politicians and newspapers are trying to teach you — you, in America, are different from us.

"We are all in the same boat, because the structure of society is everywhere the same. Money is literally king and god. It rules us everywhere, and it is bringing about a state of things with which the order imposed by a German Kaiser is a mild and beneficent régime. Indeed, I am not sure but that the greatest social crash will come in the United States, unless you soon come to recognize that a new order of things must be brought about. You pride yourselves upon your universal suffrage, but of what value is a vote to a poor man who must risk his bread and butter if he dares to vote contrary to his employer's wishes? What avails universal suffrage when one third of your legislators can be bought, and votes go to the highest bidder? No; universal suffrage is totally inadequate to save us under the existing order of things.

"I am a socialist simply because I am a rational human being, who knows the facts; because I am — I venture to think — endowed with reason and imagination.

"I do not imagine, however, that socialism is going to produce any perfect ideal order. I simply see that the economic order which has sustained the civilized world for the past two or three hundred years is now falling in pieces and must be replaced by something; that we are approaching a period that will spell either socialism or chaos.

"If unhappily chaos should come, it will be due to the opponents of socialism, which is the only peaceful, rational method of social organization under the new economic conditions, due to machine industry and the contraction of the world by means of the great scientific discoveries of our time.

"If you want to see a fuller statement of my views and the grounds for them, look at the article on Socialism in the 'Forum' last month. But we socialists spend years in study, and we can't give the results adequately in a brief form. Miss Brewster, I feel that you are in earnest, far more in earnest than most women whom I have met from your country. I do not wonder that you are perplexed. I would not change places with you. I would far rather have the sure conviction of the truth as I see it, and be of little power in advancing the cause I believe in, than to stand as you do, rich, powerful, overwhelmed with responsibilities, not knowing how to use your power, and trying in vain to patch up and prolong the existence of what is destined to be swept away ere the next generation shall have come and gone.

"Smile at my pessimism if you like; time will verify my words. If ever you come to see this as I do, perhaps then I may suggest some things for you to do with your millions." . . .

(Miss Brewster's reply to the foregoing letter.)

. . . "Your letter has deeply stirred me. Not that anything you say surprises me, or is new to me; but behind the words, I know, are the sad, dreadful facts for which they stand; and, being a creature endowed with some imagination, I can in some measure realize what that simple statement means, when you say that six millions of your people are on the brink of pauperism.

"Good God! what endless heartaches, what physical misery, what degradation of mind and soul is implied in those few words! I am glad you do not envy me my wealth. I am beginning to think that I am not so much to be envied as I thought at first I might be. I have been amazed, in these last few weeks, to learn from numberless sources of the chagrin, disappointment, and perplexity of many rich men and women who have thought to benefit the world by the 'charity' which you so despise. They have put up great institutions, only to find that in many cases it was the least helpful thing that they could do; that a large part of the money was spent on taxes, insurance, agents, servants, go-betweens; that, after all, when they had gathered their orphans or cripples or old women together, they had brought about an utterly cheerless, artificial state of things, and have proved that for the average human being with natural human instincts the poorest home is often more preferable than the most palatial asylum.

"So, set your heart at rest. I am not going to spend my money in that way. Whatever may be the political and social changes which will take place in the next twenty years, — and doubtless they will be many and great, — of one thing I am sure, no new condition of things can be made permanent or harmonious except by means of two things. The first of these is moral character. The second is intellectual insight into cause and effect and relation. In any condition of things we must have righteousness, and we must have trained minds. You will doubtless agree with me that selfishness and ignorance are the two monster dragons that are threatening now, as they always have done, to devour us, only we should differ as to the way in which they are to be slain. You have a definite theory as to how this is to be done, which I do not yet thoroughly understand. I see your goal, but I do not understand how you propose to reach it without doing away with individuality and crushing out some of the deepest human instincts. True, many of our instincts are brutish. There is still the tiger and the ape within us, which, as John Fiske says, is our inheritance of 'original sin' from our brute ancestors. I agree with you that such instincts must be eliminated, but how? By dynamite, fear, revolution, legislation?

"You are right: we may make the selfish fear, and that is often a very salutary thing to do if nothing better can be done. A business man was telling me only the other day of the different relations between employers and employees in Fall River and other manufacturing places since the strikes of the last few years.

"But, after all, though fear and legislation can do something to convert a brutal man into a decent man for a time, there must needs be something else, — the gospel of love and humanity, which of his own free will he must choose to accept and apply understandingly.

"I shall not attempt to palliate any of the existing evils, nor, on the other hand, shall I attempt to undermine our present social and political system even if I could. Certainly I shall not try to do this until I am very certain that I see the right method of substituting something better in its place.

"By the way, have you read Bellamy's 'Looking Backward'? It is very suggestive, and Nationalization of Industries is getting to be more of a fad in Boston than Esoteric Buddhism or Christian Science. Bellamy tells us what we must try to attain; but, alas! he gives little hint of what must be our first step toward the attainment. This is the problem which you and I must help our generation to solve.

"Go on with your socialistic schemes. I believe they contain a half truth; at all events, to talk about them as you do will make people think, for you speak from the deepest conviction. Out of all this *sturm und drang* period must surely come clear insight and right action: at least I am optimist enough to hope so; and my work shall be to think out the solution, as far as I may, but at all events to do what in me lies to set people to thinking; to make life a little sweeter and better; to infuse into it more hope for a few of my generation, and thus help to make their children ready for the new order of things if it comes.

"In this great city money flows like water. There are streets where, for a mile, every house must be the home of a millionaire, for no one else could afford to live in such a one. Yet, within two miles of these palaces there is the direst want, the most frightful squalor, and the problem of New York is fast getting to be like the problem of London.

"Most of our women dabble a little in charity now and then. They get up charity balls and fairs to satisfy their consciences in that way, and flatter themselves when they spend their money lavishly in luxuries for their own pleasure that they are giving employment to the poor and doing God service. They will sometimes give their money; they will sometimes give a little time to cut out garments at a sewing circle; but not one in five hundred will give her personal service even for a half day a week in coming face to face with those who need the help of her intelligence and her human sympathy.

"Of this I am convinced: men are never to be uplifted permanently, except by human sympathy, intelligently directed and expressed, and by personal contact with those who do not come to them to dole out 'charity,' but who come as brothers to lend them a helping hand.

"There are a few who begin the work; there are fewer still who continue it. The other day a gentleman, who is giving his life to the rescuing of street children, told me of the faintheartedness of his voluntary helpers, who come a half dozen Sundays to his mission, but who rarely come longer when they discover that, to use his own coarse but forcible words, which you will pardon my quoting verbatim, '*they must be willing to pick lice off those children for Christ's sake.*' . . .

"Well, dear friend, we are both working in very different ways. You would tear down; I would build up, or 'patch up,' as you say. Which of us is the wiser, time will tell; but however differently we may labor, it is for the same end after all that we are striving, — 'putting society on a just and rational basis,' as you would phrase it, or bringing God's kingdom upon earth, as the Christ called it, — and so I bid you God-speed." . . .

CHAPTER VII.

One morning in April we had risen from a leisurely, late breakfast, a luxury which, with our press of work, we did not often allow ourselves, except when, as in this case, we had been up late the previous night.

Hélène brought in the usual bulky bag of mail matter, and we settled ourselves to our morning's task, I taking charge of all letters that were not of a private nature, and consigning to the waste basket innumerable quires of paper devoted to more or less roundabout appeals for aid, and lectures and advice *ad libitum.*

Occasionally we stopped to read aloud to each other bits of the letters, and discuss or laugh over their contents. This morning I remember I was examining a document in regard to a prison reform society, containing a request that Mildred would allow her name to be used as vice-president of it, when an exclamation from her startled me into dropping the letter and turning round.

"Well, what now?" I asked, in response to the intimation from the puckered forehead and pursed-up lips that something was the matter. "Another love-sick poet? or is it a count this time? It must be time for another suitor; you have n't had an offer of marriage for at least ten days, have you?"

"Indeed, Ruby, this is no joke, I assure you," replied Mildred, gazing blankly at the letter in her hand. "It is from General Lawrence."

"What!" I exclaimed; "that distinguished-looking man who has written all those books upon political economy? He talked with me in such an entertaining way the other night and told the funniest stories. I was afraid he would be awfully erudite and dry, but he was n't at all."

"No; he can be very entertaining," sighed Mildred. "I have met him several times since we have been in New York. He was a classmate of papa's at Yale and a gallant soldier in the war. Judge Matthews said he thought him one of the clearest and ablest thinkers in the country, and it seems that years ago he had achieved a European reputation."

"Yes," I said, "I have seen his articles in the 'Fortnightly' and 'Edinburgh' reviews, and he spoke the other night as if he were well acquainted with Browning and Froude and half of the literary people of England."

"His wife wore fine sapphires, and I overheard her say that she was devoted to German opera," added Mildred, musingly.

"Well, what of it?" I asked, much mystified at this apparently irrelevant remark.

"Why, only this," answered Mildred, dryly; "this entertaining society man, this famous political economist, writes to me this morning piteously begging for an immediate loan of ten thousand dollars to keep the sheriff out of his house."

"Heavens! Mildred. Why, I supposed he had enough money to live on," I cried, aghast. "He lives in one of those pretty two-thousand-a-year apartments up by the park, does he not? I have heard people say what a charming little home they had, and everything in such good taste. Pray how have they managed it?"

"Oh, in the simplest way in the world — on other people's money," replied Mildred, with a shade of scorn in her tone. "The fact is, as all his friends know, he is as poor as a church-mouse. But he has always been accustomed to living well, and he has not the faintest idea of household economy in spite of his fine theories of political economy. He is generous and warm-hearted, and helped papa with a loan when he was in college trying to live on three hundred a year, and I cannot forget a kindness like that. Of course, it would be the easiest thing in the world for me to give him the ten thousand outright. A loan would be a gift for that matter, for he could never repay it, as his income is only three thousand a year, I fancy, and his expenses are at least one or two thousand more."

"Of course his wife must be the cause of all this," I remarked. "Any woman who will spend borrowed money on sapphires" —

"Oh, they were probably heirlooms; she came of a rich family," interrupted Mildred.

"No matter," I continued; "any woman who will wear sapphires and has the assurance to go to a dinner party with its attendant expenses of dress, carriage, et cetera, when she cannot pay her debts and expects at any minute to be sold out of house and home, is a woman who deserves to have a pretty sharp lesson taught her, and I hope you will do it. Now, don't let those blue eyes of his and that majestic manner overawe you and cajole you into feeling that you owe him a debt of gratitude to be paid by getting him out of this emergency; for it will serve only to let him teach his children that the highroad to comfort and ease is to go on the principle that the public owes a genius a living."

"No, I do not mean to do that," replied Mildred, thoughtfully; "but I cannot let this disgrace come to them when I can help it as well as not, and it is a rather awkward thing for me to dictate conditions to a man who is old enough to be my father, one who has risked his life on many a battlefield, and is a genius and a famous scholar. I cannot lay the blame on his wife. She adores him, and he thinks her failures are better than other people's successes. The whole family in fact forms the most genuine mutual admiration society. They seem utterly oblivious of the fact that in letting their milkman's bill go unpaid, and in giving their children money to go riding in the goat carriage in the park, they are doing anything dishonorable.

"Every one who knows them says they have no more wisdom in bringing up their children than two babies. They let them eat and drink what they like, sit up as late as they like, and care more about their speaking French and German well than about their knowing the multiplication table, or anything practical.

"If they were not such devout churchpeople, one would not be so amazed at this extravagance," ejaculated Mildred warmly, "though perhaps genius may be pardoned for lacking common sense and common honesty," she added, grimly.

Then rising, she continued, as she put on her hat and gloves: "I know what I shall do. I have a scheme for helping him in a way that will be something more than merely giving him immediate material aid. I know a dear old lady who used to be papa's friend and his, and I will go at once to see her. She can tell me some facts that I need to know."

Two hours later, she had but just returned when the General called.

He looked nervous and flushed, and I never saw Mildred seem more embarrassed. In an adjoining room I awaited with some impatience the close of the interview.

At last she came into my room, and throwing herself down on the white bear-skin rug before the grate, she exclaimed, with a little groan, "There, I 've done it, though it was the most painful thing I ever did in my life. I felt that I must seem so mean and arrogant to make myself the arbiter of the fate of a man like him, and to dictate terms which must have been horribly humiliating. Think of my setting myself up to instruct a man who has deserved the honor of the friendship of men like Mazzini and Von Moltke and Carlyle and Sumner."

"How did you begin?" I queried, realizing for the first time what a difficult thing this must have been to a generous-hearted girl like Mildred.

"Oh," she said, "I began by reminding him of his kindness to papa, and assuring him that I was ready and glad to be of assistance to him. He looked so grateful that I found it almost impossible to screw up my courage to continue. But, after stammering over it a minute, I put on a bold front and went on to say that I felt it my duty to make my gift, for it was to be a gift, not a loan, upon certain stringent conditions in order that similar circumstances might not occur again. I would state what they were, and then he might consult with his family and let me know whether he would accept them or not.

"He replied sadly, 'I am in your hands, Miss Brewster. There is no question of my volition in the matter.'

"It almost brought the tears to my eyes, Ruby, for he did look so grand and noble, and it was so pathetic to think of a man of his powers forced to humble himself before a girl like me. He said that for years this shadow of debt had been over him, making life a purgatory for him, which is true enough. I hear that he has long been borrowing from every one of his own and his wife's relatives, and has mortgaged everything they own, even her jewels. One wonders what he can be made of to have endured such shame and yet to have counted it less shame than to live in a small, economical way within his income. But he spoke of his debts with all the ingenuousness of a child, just as though they were an affliction sent by Providence, for which he was in no wise responsible, and I really think that he felt them so.

"'My first condition,' I said, 'is that you shall give me a full and accurate statement of your financial affairs, including old debts which are not pressing, insurance, mortgages, and everything of a money nature.'

"Secondly, I asked that none of his children should receive private lessons in dancing, French, or anything else, which were not paid for in full in advance. I could see that this was a very bitter thing for the General. One of his daughters is a girl of artistic talent, and he has been giving her expensive lessons in painting, for which, as I knew, he has never paid.

"I asked General Lawrence pretty pointedly," continued Mildred, "if, so long as a fair education could be had in our schools without cost, he felt justified in taking other people's money to give his children accomplishments."

"And pray what did he say to that?" I inquired.

"Why, nothing," answered Mildred. "He looked absolutely dazed, as if it were a totally new idea. In fact, I do not think that it had occurred to him that children could be brought up respectably without knowing French and dancing.

"I wanted to tell him," said Mildred, "that I counted the best part of my education to be the years that I spent studying geography and arithmetic with both boys and girls, with white and black, with rich and poor, with Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, in a public school, where success was gauged by individual merit alone, and where we little bigots and partisans learned to be tolerant and respectful toward one another. One of the most salutary things I ever learned was that the son of a ragpicker, in my class, was a better mathematician than I, and that a mulatto girl across the aisle usually outranked me.

"I told General Lawrence it was my firm conviction that his children would be far more benefited by a few years' study of ordinary English branches with ordinary children than by anything else he could do for them educationally, for I feared that they were growing up to know only one side of life and only one class of people, and their knowledge and sympathies would be narrow. He nodded assent, and I went on.

"My third condition was, that he and his wife should sign a paper promising for the next three years to allow no debts to any one but me, or some agent authorized by me, to run beyond a month's time. Any failure to meet such debts promptly must be immediately reported to me for settlement, for which I should take a mortgage on his furniture and personal effects.

"I told him that my intention was not merely to help his immediate and pressing need, but to entirely free him from debt. Nevertheless, I was unwilling to undertake this, unless he were ready to rigidly insist upon living within his income, thus teaching his children some lessons of self-sacrifice and thrift. I told him plainly that I was sure a little different management would reduce his doctor's bills, for I had reason to think that his children's constant ailing was due to the foolish way in which they had been indulged. He looked amazed and annoyed at this, and begged me to specify.

"I replied, 'Mrs. Lawrence herself told me of three parties which her eight-year-old Gladys attended within a single week, and she afterwards remarked incidentally that the child had a tendency to insomnia and dyspepsia and was taking medicine all the time. Moreover, your older daughter privately informed me that she had begun a diet of vinegar and slate-pencils to reduce her plumpness.

"'No,' I said, 'I shall not presume to dictate to you as to the methods which you are to pursue with your children. But I have seen them several times and have an interest in them, and I believe that their character will receive a permanent injury from the irregular life which they are living and the false notions they have imbibed in regard to keeping up a style which they cannot afford. So for their sake, and in addition to paying all your debts, I am willing to send the oldest to good boarding-schools where simple diet, regular hours, and systematic work can help to make of them a stronger man and woman than there is prospect of their becoming now.'

"I could see that it was terribly galling for him to have me sit there and arraign him, as it were, for his conduct; but he clenched his teeth, kept silence, and heard me to the end. Then he cleared his throat, and after a moment said, hoarsely, without looking up:

"'Miss Brewster, you are very kind. With your permission I will call on you to-morrow at eleven.'"

The next morning, a half hour after the time appointed, General Lawrence and his wife appeared, both looking as if they had passed a restless night. Mrs. Lawrence, clad in an elegant gown, quite outshone Mildred, who wore a quiet street costume of gray serge. That costly dress and the queenly air of its owner nettled me.

"Mildred," I whispered, as she came back for a pencil, "do think twice before you squander your thousands on saving those people from the just penalty of their folly and sin."

"I am not thinking of them so much as of their children," said she gravely; "and it is far more folly than sin. Mrs. Lawrence is a Southern woman, sweet-tempered and charming, but despising little economies as petty Yankee meanness, and she will have to submit to receiving instruction from me on that score, or else I shall let the sheriff come."

But Mildred certainly did seem somewhat disconcerted when she learned that the ten-thousand-dollar loan which had been asked for was less than half of General Lawrence's indebtedness. He confessed, she told me afterward, that his expenses last year were over five thousand dollars, while his receipts from his literary work, his sole income, were only twenty-eight hundred. "We were obliged, actually obliged, to go into society more or less on account of the General's position," said his wife, apologetically. "General Lawrence is continually meeting important people in the literary and political world, and can't you see, my dear Miss Brewster, how essential this is for his writing? And, of course, if we are always well entertained ourselves, we have to treat people decently when they come to see us. I have been my own seamstress, and have economized in every way, but it is absolutely impossible for us to live on three thousand a year. My husband's writings would bring us three times that if he could get what he deserves. But it is always so with men of genius; their own generation never appreciates them," she added bitterly, while her husband fidgeted and took a turn around the room.

"Well, and what did you say to such rubbish as that?" I inquired of Mildred.

"I said," answered she, "that Emerson and many others had found 'plain living and high thinking' quite compatible, and that I thought a residence in some suburban town would obviate the burdens of society, and allow them to live within their income. At all events," I said, "although I stood ready to offer, as a gift, their entire immunity from debt, this could not be done except by a strict construction of the conditions which I had laid down. However, I offered General Lawrence an opportunity to lay up a little money, telling him that I had various projects in view, and should need the assistance of the pen of a ready writer in carrying out many of them. I told him that I would put to his credit in the bank ten dollars for every newspaper column which he would write on subjects that I should give him: at the end of three years this amount should be turned over to him, and meanwhile he must 'cut his coat according to his cloth,' and manage in some way to live strictly within his income."

"And what did Madam say to that?" I asked.

"Oh, her pride kept the tears back; they both said nothing and signed the papers; but I know that she must think me a hateful, close-fisted Yankee, with no conception of granting a favor graciously and without cruelly wounding the recipient's feelings."

We saw very little of the Lawrences after this. It was understood that little Gladys's health required country air, and a cottage out of town was engaged. The children were not sent to school, but kept up French and read history and literature at home with their mamma, and although they would have found it difficult to bound Missouri or do an example in long division, they could talk glibly of Louis XI. and the Cid.

Whether a beneficial reform was wrought in the domestic economy of the family, I never knew, and I think Mildred had her doubts, though she was not called upon to pay any more debts.

We heard incidentally that the General's cigar bills and physician's fees had not decreased, and that his last work on the Philosophy of the Greek Tragedians had received unqualified praise from Professor Curtius.

This little episode was only one of the many which marked our brief stay in New York, and gave me an opportunity to study the many-sided character of my friend. She had some aristocratic acquaintances in the city who were only too happy to lionize her, and she was soon overwhelmed with invitations to lunch parties, theatre parties, et cetera, in which I was also kindly included.

"You must go, dear; I want some one to back me up," she used to say at first. "I have courage enough to go into a pulpit and preach a sermon, or to go down into the slums alone, or to do a thousand things which would make most girls horrified, but I fairly shake in my shoes when I have to be the target of the eyes of all these society women and dollar-hunters. I know they would not care a jot for me were it not for my money, and I cannot help thinking of it all the time. I feel suspicious of every one in a way that makes me blush.

"I can't talk society small talk; I never could. I wonder how people manage to do it and wax so eloquent over nothing," she once said. "But I suppose I must try to learn how," she added, with a comical wry face.

"Why try to learn, why not act your natural self?" I protested, for I had quietly observed that Mildred's simple and unaffected bearing and transparent sincerity had proved far more attractive in society than the persiflage and repartee of more brilliant women, though I knew that she herself felt conscious of shyness and a sense that she was out of her proper element.

"Why not act my natural self?" repeated Mildred. "Because, my dear, I like to be liked, and my natural, unconventional self would lead me to talk of all sorts of things which society would not like. If I talked as much as I wished to on the subjects that interest me most, I should be voted a Boston bore, a woman with a mission, with hobbies, with theories, — altogether a very unlikable person aside from my ducats."

"Nonsense, Mildred!" I cried. "I have seen a hundred times as much of society as you have, and I can say that the greatest boon in the way of novelty would be a little bit of the independence and freshness so natural to you. You are a woman to whom real things mean something. You are earnest. You like to talk about earnest things, and why should you feel obliged to condescend to the level of society small talk and meaningless compliments?"

"Oh, I don't propose to be a hypocrite," said Mildred, with a little amused laugh, at my unaccustomed vehemence in this line of thought. She sat for a minute absently picking in pieces the Jacqueminot rose in her corsage; then she said, "But you know, Ruby, there is such a thing as being a doctrinaire and a dull dogmatist, and, on the other hand, being full of tact and sympathy and wit, accomplishing the best results in an indirect way, when no amount of direct preaching could do it. A woman of character can make even her small talk a tremendous power if she only knows how to go to work.

"I want to be a power, I honestly confess that, but I have little worldly wisdom, and I have much to learn. I have lived in a world of books and ideas, and now I am thrown into this perplexing, brilliant, kaleidoscopic world of society, and I feel as unsophisticated as a girl of sixteen."

"But there is plenty of homage given you," I remarked. "You were the envy of every woman in the room the other night when Lord H—— took you out to dinner."

"Homage to *me?* Homage to my money, you ought to say," replied Mildred, with a touch of bitterness, as she shook the rose-leaves from her lap into the waste-basket. "I wore opals and satin, and am, as the papers say, a 'great catch;' but how much attention do you suppose my lord would have paid me six months ago if he had met me running down Joy Street with my bag of books, to take a Cambridge car?"

"But plenty of women are admired who are not rich," I remarked; "it does n't follow" —

"No," said Mildred, breaking in impetuously; "but women are not admired for their real worth. It always used to madden me to see how the nice, sensible girls, who really had original ideas and could say something worth saying, were always left to be the wall-flowers.

"Nine men out of ten actually like a little, helpless doll of a creature who can talk by the hour and say nothing; and they don't care for a brave, self-helpful girl who has any independence of spirit, and who does not flatter a man by demanding his attention and referring to his opinion on every subject which requires more thought than crocheting or tennis.

"No," after a moment's pause. "Men do not find thoughtful women interesting. I learned that long ago. I went to a mixed high school, and when we young folks went on picnics or sleighrides, it was always the poorest scholar in the class who had the smallest waist and wore the most bracelets, a good-natured little society girl, who received the most attention from the young men. But they were all callow boys, and I did not think or care much about them. I knew a few men of the finest sort who showed me what men could be, and I did not think then, what I am coming to believe now, that many of the real gentlemen who mean to be chivalrous, and who imagine that they give the highest honor to women, actually admire the Howells-farce-type of woman above every other, — that is to say, a pretty, prattling, conscientious, irrational little goose."

"I don't know anything about Howells's women," said I, rather surprised at this outburst; "and I did n't suppose you ever condescended to anything less than Hawthorne or George Eliot."

"Oh yes, I always read everything of Howells's, though I abominate his women. But he is so inimitably droll and bright, and then the local Boston flavor of his stories is rather fascinating to a Bostonian, you know."

"Very likely he does not admire his women himself; he may simply wish to show up that type," I suggested.

"Yes, and a pretty common type I am finding it to be after all, though I once used to scorn the idea," said Mildred, despondingly.

Then she added, as she nervously twirled the little silver Maltese cross, the badge of the King's Daughters, which she always wore, "I suppose I have known as little and cared as little about men as any girl who ever lived. But I have lived too much like a nun," she sighed; "this new life of these past few weeks has awakened me; I feel that I have missed something.

"I wish" —

"Well, dear, what do you wish?" I asked, as she hesitated.

"I wish," said she decidedly, "that I could meet some thoroughly fine men with brains and heart who liked me for myself, who liked what was best in me. I honestly confess it is pleasant to be liked and sought after, pleasanter than I used to think. I can see now how easy it is to get one's head turned." Then, after a little pause:

"But in society we can never be sure what the attraction is. Everything, vulgarity, ignorance, immorality, — everything is pardonable with wealth."

"Hush, dear, you are getting desperate," I said. "There are, no doubt, many grades of New York society where all that may be pardoned on the score of wealth; but you have not seen much of that, so far, and we have met many really fine, cultivated people who have traveled and studied and have real character. You spoke enthusiastically of the talk about Art which you had the other night over in the bay window with Professor Stuart and that English artist with all the letters after his name."

"Yes, indeed, they were as entertaining as possible, and gave me ideas I had never thought of by myself; but then they were graybeards of fifty. I was thinking of younger men whom one might" — and Mildred hesitated and looked out of the window, blushing.

"Why don't you finish it," I said mischievously; "whom one might marry?"

But Mildred only laughed and said nothing.

CHAPTER VIII.

ONE morning at breakfast, as we were sipping our chocolate, Mildred cried out, "Oh, Ruby, I forgot to tell you! I am going to have a symposium here to-night."

"A symposium! — of whom? and what is it all to be about? Let me hear your latest scheme," I queried, laying down my black Hamburgs and looking up at her. Her face was very bright and animated, and the scheme, whatever it was, evidently interested her considerably.

Mildred leaned back in her chair and twirled the beautiful ruby ring which she always wore. This ring had been her sister's, and was an heirloom; she rarely wore any other jewels, and when she was preoccupied she had a habit of turning it round and round on her finger.

"I mean," said Mildred, "to get together all the wisdom on the tenement-house question that is available in New York and Brooklyn, and see what the consensus of opinion is; and I am going to have my amanuensis take notes for future reference. You know I have some coöperative theories of my own in regard to the matter, and I wish to ascertain what these practical workers think of them."

"Whom have you invited?" I inquired, beginning to be interested.

"Oh, Professor Felix Adler, for one. He built those tenements that we saw the other day down on Cherry Street, you remember, and he is also very much interested in manual training. Then there is Mr. Pratt, who founded that great Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, with all kinds of industrial training and a free library and reading-room. Then — let me see — I have invited Mr. Barnard of the Five Points House of Industry, Mrs. Alice Wellington Rollins, who wrote 'Uncle Tom's Tenement,' Mr. Charles L. Brace of the Children's Aid Society, most of the agents of the model tenement houses that I have visited, several of the lady visitors in the charity organizations, and one or two architects."

As it proved, however, not all who were invited came, but there were enough to comfortably fill our pretty parlor. There were Jews and Gentiles, radicals and high-churchmen, all interested in the same subject, and many of them meeting each other for the first time.

Mildred had chocolate and cakes and fruit served, and then proceeded to business in the dignified, quiet way which so well became her.

"I have asked you here this evening," she said, "that I may get the benefit of your united wisdom and experience. I seek enlightenment as to the best way to solve the problem of the housing of the poor in a great city. I wish to do something to make the conditions of existence a little more bearable for some of the wretched creatures that I have been seeing of late in such places as the Mulberry Street Bend, on Hester, Forsyth, and Cherry streets, and a hundred other places.

"For some years, in connection with the Associated Charity work of Boston, I have visited poor families in the alleys of North Street, and have made myself somewhat familiar with the problems that are besetting us in the herding together of enormous numbers of people under conditions that, I think I am safe in saying, never before existed. What little I have seen in other cities is as nothing to what I find here. And it is here in New York, where I am told you have the most thickly populated square mile on the globe, and where the dregs from Castle Garden remain, that I propose to do something.

"As I have been about with your district visitors and have picked my way among the garbage barrels and swarming mass of humanity in the Jewish quarter, on their market day, I have wondered how it was possible for morality to exist in the close personal contact and absolute want of privacy which this lack of space necessitates. Now, tell me, what is to be done to relieve this condition of things and permit those little *gamins* to grow up decent American citizens? Are things worse or are they better than they used to be? I hear that a mint of money is spent in charity, but I hear also that in the past one of the greatest causes of pauperism has been found to be unwise philanthropy, and the more I look into the question the more perplexed and uncertain I find myself.

"What does your experience suggest?" asked Mildred, turning with one of her winning smiles to a cheery-faced lady of perhaps fifty years of age, who sat at her right.

"That is a pretty hard question to answer," was the reply. "I 've been at work for twenty-five years down on the East side near the river, and I am free to say that I don't see much improvement. Of course, things are better in some ways; there is better sanitary inspection than there used to be, and need enough there is of it too, with these filthy Italians and Polish Jews who are pouring in here every week by the thousands. I must say I have n't much hope of them."

"Yes, of course; but have n't you hope of the children?" inquired Mildred, eagerly.

"Yes, a little more hope for them, certainly," responded the lady somewhat dubiously, with a sigh that contrasted strangely with her bright, hopeful face; "but I must say frankly, that the more I see of the poor, the more hopeless I sometimes feel and the less able to make generalizations and give advice. I used to think it a comparatively simple thing, requiring merely money and hard work. Ten years ago I could have given you advice very glibly, but I don't feel so sure about anything now; there are so many sides to everything, and so many exceptions to every rule.

"Of course, good tenement houses are a great thing, provided you can have a janitor and a housekeeper to keep them in order. But the best model tenement house in the world would be completely ruined if entirely given over to the class of tenants I know about. They will just as likely as not throw their ashes and garbage down the waste-pipes, and pile all their bedding out on the fire-escapes, blocking them up so as to make them almost useless in case of a fire. It requires the patience of Job to deal with such people. They don't care for your new improvements, and they don't propose to be restrained by any regulations or rules.

"As for the model tenement houses that we have, doubtless they are excellent. But they don't as a general thing reach the lowest class of people, and in any event they are a mere drop in the bucket. There 's just one consolation about it all, as I say to myself when I go about, — these people have never been used to anything better, and they don't know how miserable they are."

"That is just what I think is the worst of it," said Mrs. Rollins, as the speaker paused. "The fact that they don't know anything better, don't expect anything better, don't want anything better, is the frightful thing about it. As to whether things are getting better or not I can't say, but I know this, the tenement house has come to stay; it cannot be eliminated from the modern problem of living. Thousands of our well-to-do people are living in flats and suites simply to avoid the burden and expense of having to entertain so much company, and these buildings, like the Spanish flats or the Dacotah, are really only another kind of tenement house. As I say, the tenement house has come to stay. Separate houses for separate families are going to be fewer and fewer in our large cities, where land is becoming more and more valuable. The thing that remains for us to do is to build with more skill and wisdom, so that while the separate house must more and more give way, the home need not be sacrificed."

"Miss Brewster," said a gray-bearded man whose name I did not learn, "as to the question whether the charities and sanitary improvements of the city have amounted to anything in the last twenty-five years, it seems to me it is not well for us to rely wholly on personal impressions. There are figures at command which can abundantly show that in two respects at least — the lessening of the rates of mortality and the reduction of arrests for crime — we have made an immense advance on twenty-five years ago, in spite of the fact that the population has nearly doubled. Permit me to state a few facts."

"Good; this is just what I want," said Mildred with keen attention.

He continued: "In 1864, when the sanitary examination of the city was made, some wards were found to be peopled at the rate of 290,000 persons to the square mile, while in the most densely populated part of London the number was less than

176,000 to the square mile. To show what sanitary regulations will do, let me say that the number of deaths in London previous to a good sanitary government was one in twenty, and in New York one in thirty-five, while after such regulations the number in London was reduced to one in forty-five, and in New York to one in thirty-eight and a half.

"We think our tenement houses now are bad enough, but let me read you a report of the condition of things in 1866. 'At this time the cities of New York and Brooklyn were filled with nuisances, many of them of years' duration. The streets were uncleaned; manure heaps, containing thousands of tons, occupied piers and vacant lots; sewers were obstructed; houses were crowded and badly ventilated and lighted; stables and yards were filled with stagnant water, and many dark and damp cellars were inhabited. The streets were obstructed, and the wharves and piers were filthy and dangerous from dilapidation. Cattle were driven through the streets at all hours of the day in large numbers. Slaughter houses were open to the streets, and were offensive from the accumulated offal and blood, or filled the sewers with decomposing animal matter. Gas companies, shell-burners, and fat-boilers pursued their occupations without regard to the public health or comfort, filling the air with disgusting odors; and roaming swine were the principal scavengers of the streets and gutters!'

"Moreover," the gentleman continued, "owing to the general indifference and ignorance concerning sanitary construction of houses, tenement houses used often to be found having on one floor ten or twelve interior rooms, with no means of ventilation or light except through other rooms ; and at night, when these rooms were occupied and the doors closed, one may imagine the amount of poison which each person was compelled to breathe. Now, all that has been remedied to a great extent. No such houses are allowed to be built, and in lodging-houses there is a wholesome regulation as to the number of cubic feet of air-space allowed to each individual. Sanitary inspection is conducted by competent officials at regular intervals. The public conscience has been aroused in this matter.

"As I look back thirty-five years, I find that among the better class of people there is far more fastidiousness in regard to all matters of personal cleanliness than there used to be. There are more bathing facilities, a greater delicacy in manners at table, a greater tendency to isolation and privacy in personal matters of the toilet, and so forth, and therefore among every class of people a better sentiment in regard to the enforcement of sanitary regulations than there used to be when I was a boy. But those who are helping these things, although many absolutely, are relatively pitifully few. Yet no one who knows the condition of affairs twenty years ago can question that an advance has been made. We are learning to organize charity better, we are spending our efforts in more profitable directions, and we are training our public not to increase pauperism by the old-fashioned, pernicious methods of indiscriminate giving. In regard to the lessening of juvenile crime I think Mr. Brace can give the most valuable opinion of any one present."

All eyes were turned to Mr. Brace, and there was a hearty hand-clapping as he prepared to speak.

"Since 1852," he said, "the society which I represent has been doing its best to rescue the little wanderers of this city from lives of suffering and degradation. The value of its work is too well known for me to enlarge upon it. We are met here this evening to discuss tenement houses, and I will therefore take the time to make only two or three statements in reply to Miss Brewster's inquiry as to whether the morals of the community have improved, and whether charitable and reformatory work is of much value. Now, in spite of the fact that the overcrowding in the poor quarters is greater than ever, that the lowest of the European population are pouring into our city to an alarming extent, that our municipal government has often been notoriously corrupt, in spite of all this, I say, by means of the efforts which have been put forth, there has been a steady and most satisfactory decrease in crime during all these years. Allow me to give you a few figures. In 1859 there were more than five thousand five hundred commitments for female vagrancy, and in 1886, notwithstanding the general increase in population, there were less than two thousand five hundred commitments for the same cause. In the eleven years preceding 1886, the decrease in arrests for drunkenness among males was just about fifty per cent. I will hand you a table, Miss Brewster, giving you the report of juvenile crimes since 1875, and also the Police record containing the general report for the city, the details of which you can read at your leisure. I will simply say now that the net summing up of these reports shows a remarkable decrease in crime of all sorts of twelve and a half per cent. This, I think, will answer your question as to whether, on the whole, our city is any better."

"There is another thing to be noticed," said a little lady over in the corner. "People of all classes think more of going into the country and getting fresh air than they used to. Thousands of families who thirty years ago would not have spent two or three weeks in the year out of the city now think they must have two months at least. They have come to consider this a necessity for themselves, and it makes them through sympathy appreciate a little the needs of the very poor during the fierce summer heat. The lovely charities of the Flower Mission, Country Week, and the harbor excursions have grown out of this sympathy for others.

"I, for one, think that the world is far more kind and sympathetic than it used to be, in all sorts of little ways, as is shown by the multiplication of such societies as the 'King's Daughters' and 'Lend a Hand' clubs, by the increased tenderness with children, and prevention of cruelty to animals.

I don't mean to say that people are much happier, for they have a higher standard and are less content with objectionable things than they used to be when I was a child forty years ago. But I for one do not decry that kind of discontent with existing bad circumstances. To me it seems to be only the precursor of reform. I do not believe in encouraging the poor to be content with their lot. I think, with Mrs. Rollins, that the worst thing possible is this fearful apathy toward bad surroundings, of which one sees so much among our low foreigners. The first thing to do in Americanizing them is to make them discontented with living like the brutes."

"And what is the first step in that direction?" inquired Mildred, thoughtfully. "Is it more legislation to regulate and limit this fearful inflow of more people than we are able to cope with; or is it a large concerted movement of capitalists to provide better tenements? Or is it education and Christianization?"

"As I hold, it is each and all of these," said a blond-haired, keen-eyed young man in the back part of the room, rising as he spoke and leaning against the mantel. He spoke in a clear, crisp way which was pleasant to hear.

"Legislation is needed, after we first enforce the laws which we already have; but it would hardly be worth while to petition for new ones when we can make the old but little more than a dead letter. At present no foreigner can be allowed by law to land who has not money enough to support himself for a year; and yet how often is this law enforced? No; as long as the pressure of taxation and the burden of a great standing army exists in every country in Europe, as long as our unchristian tariff prevents the natural inflow of foreign products and grinds down the laborers of the old world, so long shall we be compelled to face this problem of Americanizing two thirds of the population of our great cities. We here in New York live in a foreign city. There are less than fifteen per cent. of us whose parents were born in this country and bred in its political, religious, and social traditions. One does n't realize this in walking down Broadway or Fifth Avenue; but in some parts of the city where most people do not often go, one would think himself in Germany, or Italy, or Poland.

"Now, you ask what is the first step toward Americanizing this foreign element. *I* say, education, Christianity, and better living. There is n't much use in trying to teach children when their stomachs are empty; there is not much use in goody-goody Sunday-school talk without the discipline in cleanliness, order, and industry which the day school alone can compel; neither is there much use in giving these people palaces to live in and supplying them with comforts and conveniences, unless at the same time you bring some moral power to bear upon them, while also helping them to a pretty good acquaintance with the three

R's. You see, it works both ways. Clean and wholesome physical surroundings create an opportunity for mental and spiritual growth, and without the latter the former would not be appreciated or preserved."

"I quite agree with the last speaker," said Professor Adler in his mild, quiet way, contrasting with the briskness of the blond young man whose common-sense talk had pleased us. "The supply of pure air, sanitary regulations, and decent comforts must be the primary object of the philanthropist who would solve the problem of the housing of the poor; but it will avail little, unless it is invariably accompanied by constant supervision, helpfulness, and sympathy. Every tenement house should have a responsible resident agent,—not a mere perfunctory person who shall issue orders and collect the rent, but one who in case of sickness or trouble can give advice and help, and by living constantly in friendly relations with tenants can initiate reforms in a wise way. The stubbornness and conservatism of the ignorant in opposing what is for their real good is one of the most surprising things we have to contend with. One would think, for instance, that a coöperative grocery store, situated in a tenement house, and giving good quality at as reasonable prices as could be obtained elsewhere, would be an inducement to the average tenant to buy. But so great is the suspicion that we are trying to take advantage of them in some way, that they will often prefer to go farther and pay more, simply to assert their independence."

"Do they take kindly to free kindergartens?" inquired Mildred.

"Yes, when they come to understand them; but the announcement of a kindergarten, free reading-room, and bath-rooms in connection with a new tenement house rarely offers much inducement to the average laborer looking for rooms. But a large room which can be used in the morning for kindergarten purposes, and at other times for a gathering place for clubs and singing-classes, is an invaluable thing in every large tenement house. This gives a foothold for all kinds of work to be conducted by young gentlemen and ladies who desire to uplift the youth of these neighborhoods. Gymnastic classes and glee clubs form a sort of neutral ground where all may meet on a common level, and where the refinement, intelligence, and good breeding of those who are willing to give their services once or twice a week will soon make itself felt. It is not necessary that they should directly teach or preach; but if they are well-bred, kind-hearted people, they will by their mere tones of voice and their method of managing things exert a subtle influence which in time will give them the power to go further and attempt other things.

"The quickest way to Americanize an ignorant foreigner is to give him frequent object lessons in the shape of the best type of American citizen."

"I think I understand you," said Mildred, "and it is what I myself thoroughly believe. The model tenement-house question is not merely a question of brick and stone, ventilation, bath-rooms, and four per cent.; it is a question largely of providing the best means for uplifting spiritually, mentally, and physically these swarming masses. Speaking of four per cent., let me inquire whether tenement houses can be considered a good money investment. Not that I, personally, am anxious to make money out of them; but I suppose it goes without saying that anything like this which does not pay a fair percentage, and is really a charity, in the end tends to pauperize and is pernicious."

"Certainly," replied Professor Adler; "and not only that, but most of the poor are too proud to accept charity in that form, though, inconsistently enough, they may be quite ready to accept it in other ways. But anything which savors of an institution or charity, and that puts them under obligations, is sure to fail. On the other hand, to hold out to capitalists the idea that they had better put their money into tenement houses because it is a good investment is something I do not like to do. A man who wishes simply to make money would tell me that he knows far better methods than mine, and would consider my advice an impertinence. But every man, no matter how much of an egotist he may be, likes to be thought unselfish, and if I can tell him that here is a means of doing great good while at the same time he loses no money, then he may listen to me. Money wisely put into tenements can provide for the tenant far more advantages than he usually has; it can give light, air, cleanliness, many conveniences in common with others, and yield to the landlord four per cent. besides. Some good tenements pay six per cent., but this is perhaps at a sacrifice of conveniences to the tenant, or is due to some special reasons. However, as the security of the investment is so great, four per cent. may be considered fair interest."

"Good; now as to the details," said Mildred in her practical way. "I want to tell you my scheme, and then let you criticise it to the utmost. I suppose I was born with a bump for economy; at all events, nothing tries me more than the excessive waste which I have seen around me all my life. I don't mean merely waste of money, but waste of time, waste of energy and effort in every direction. Of course there is less of the latter here than in the old world, for here Yankee ingenuity does not have so hard a fight with prejudice, and every inventor of a labor-saving machine is crowned with honor. Still, there is a terrible amount of waste, especially in women's work. I will not stop to speak of all phases of it; but as I have observed men and women for years, and have seen the suffering from needless backaches caused by climbing stairs and doing housework in an unnecessarily hard way, as I have seen the complexity and endless details of our modern life crowd out, in the lives of all but the rich, the leisure which their children should have, and which they need for their own self-development, I have racked my brains to see what could be done to simplify the petty details of modern housekeeping.

"I believe that we are on the verge of a new era in this respect. The prejudices of centuries must give way to the new requirements of a civilization which will more and more create an urban population, and also a higher standard of physical comfort. Now in this, time, strength, and money must be better conserved, or we shall, as a nation, have nervous prostration, I fear.

"My only solution for this, or for a part of it at least, seems to me coöperation, so that all shall get the greatest return for the least outlay. I don't mean for a moment that I believe hotel life or boarding-house life to be the life of the family of the future. Heaven forbid! That the privacy and seclusion of the individual and family should be preserved is imperative. The home is the first consideration. But that one's food should be cooked, or one's clothes made or washed, inside the rooms occupied by the family, seems to me no essential feature of the home, and I am convinced that where prejudice can be removed, a great gain would be made by eliminating the first and last, at least from the home of the city poor.

"In regard to the value of a common laundry with set tubs, I think most of you have found them successful. I have found only one person —

an attendant in the beautiful Astral flats of Green Point — who told me that they were considered undesirable, as tending to encourage gossip and quarreling. Now the dwellings which I mean to build are intended for a lower class of people than any whom I have hitherto found occupying model tenement houses. In those on Seventy-second Street, I was told there were many mechanics earning three to four dollars a day. Such people are not what I call poor, and I design my houses for people who earn, at most, only half of that. I want to give them the greatest possible return for their money, and at the same time make a fair per cent. on the capital invested. The income thus derived I shall devote to the erection of more houses.

"I propose to make the buildings fairly fireproof, with iron staircases and stone-paved halls. The interior walls will be of painted brick. Upon the top of the house I propose to have a well-fenced, well-paved play-ground, believing that the roof space which is so rarely utilized in our great cities may be made of great service in this way. In most of the tenement houses I find that the roof is not allowed to be used for anything but drying clothes, the owners not caring to go to the extra expense necessary to make it a perfectly safe place for children. But, if it is all planned in the beginning, the expense will be comparatively slight, and the open space thus provided will afford better air than any interior court, and be, both physically and morally, a far safer place than the street.

By a simple arrangement of pulleys the drying clothes can be elevated between strong, high posts quite above the heads of the children, so that their play need not be interrupted. A stout wire netting can be arranged to keep the clothes from blowing away.

"On the upper floor of the house I shall have several store-rooms adjoining a freight elevator and a kitchen. This will be connected with every floor of the house by speaking-tubes and dumb-waiters, so that meals can be cooked here for the whole number of tenants and delivered hot when ordered. The charge will be simply for the cost of preparing the food itself and the fuel; and as everything will be bought by the quantity, the expense for each individual will be moderate. I believe that thus, with proper arrangements, and suiting the food to the tastes of the occupants, the whole question of the food supply may be solved, and three women do the work of a hundred. How does this feature of the house impress you?"

As Mildred paused, three voices exclaimed in chorus, —

"It would never work in the world!" "Perfectly impracticable!" "They would not like it at all!"

"Why not?" asked Mildred.

"Well, first of all," said a man who proved to be an agent in one of the large model tenement houses, "what would all those women do if you take away their work from them? They would be idle and shiftless, and just spend their time in gossiping and quarreling. I know 'em."

"It seems to me," said Mildred, rather tartly, "that if the average poor man's wife has not enough to do in washing, ironing, scrubbing, sweeping, making and mending clothes for a household and attending to her children, we need not feel any necessity laid upon us to fill up any spare moment she may have for herself by an addition of needless work for work's sake. I know poor mothers in Boston who don't get down so far as the Common twice a year, who scarcely see a green tree from one year's end to another, who never think they can spare a moment's time to amuse their children, and who gladly turn the poor little ones into the street to get them away from the hot cooking-stove which occupies the best part of the only family living-room. It is to such mothers that I would give a little freedom, and in time they will find something better to do than quarreling and gossiping if they live in my tenements."

"But they will have to pay a little more for their food than if they cooked it themselves. The wages of the cook must be paid, and even a little more counts," remonstrated another skeptic.

"Not at all," said Mildred, eagerly. "Think of the immense saving in fuel to begin with. Why, most of these people, as you know well, buy coal in small quantities, often by the hodful, paying for it at an enormous rate when reckoned by the ton, to say nothing of the evil of sending children out along the wharves to pick up dirty barrels and bits of wood for kindling."

"But in winter they would need the fire just the same for warmth," said some one.

"No; the whole house would have steam heat, thus making a valuable saving of space as well, by doing away with the stove and place for fuel. The halls of the model tenements now are heated by steam. I estimate that the trifle extra which would be added to the price of the room and the food would be no more than, probably not so much as, what would be spent for food and fuel in the old way; for the poor that I have known are the most extravagant people living. They buy a poor quality of food at high rates, and through bad cooking and irregularity of living waste and spoil much that they have.

"Besides, I have had another thing in mind, — that is, the mothers who go out to work by the day and have to let their children come home from school to pick up any kind of cold dinner that they find, and who, so far as my experience goes, invariably spend every cent they get upon candy and innutritious cakes bought at the bakery."

"This is all a charming theory, Miss Brewster," said a pale-faced lady with auburn hair, who had hitherto remained silent; "but I am afraid that until you have a more enlightened community to deal with it won't work. The conservatism, perhaps one might call it the stupidity, of the lower classes is something we are fighting against all the time. Every innovation has to be introduced with great caution in order not to offend them. Strange as it may seem, these people who come from lands where they have been down-trodden, with no privileges of any sort, stickle more for their rights and independence, and are far less willing to yield to restrictions than we. They don't want to be 'bossed.' They want to do as they please, even if they pay more for it and are not half so well served. The idea of saving fuel and getting rid of the nuisance of ash-barrels would not appeal to the low Italians. They cook their little messes of macaroni over a few sticks, and would not dream of using the fuel that an Irishman would require.

"Let me tell you about a cheap lunch-room that was started as an experiment some time ago. We gave good, nutritious food at the lowest cost price, and what was the result? It remained on our hands, and we could not sell it, and discovered to our surprise that the people for whose advantage we had established it learned that if they waited until the food was cold and ready to spoil they could come to the back door and ask for it and get it for little or nothing. It would really have been wiser to throw the food away. Yet the very same people who would do this showed a decided pride when they suspected any supervision or interference in their domestic affairs. A coöperative kitchen was established in one of our tenement houses as an experiment, that is, a range to be used in common, in order to save the fuel and heat in summer of a fire in each separate room. But no one liked to use it. Each woman was afraid of interfering or being interfered with."

"Naturally enough," said Mildred; "and anything that should tend to mix up families, where the yielding of personal preferences and 'taking turns' is involved, would probably fail so long as human nature remains human nature. I do not propose anything of that sort, you see."

"I think myself," said Professor Adler, "that the idea is thoroughly good, and if cautiously and wisely carried out would be a success. I should like to see the experiment tried. I have all my life been preaching coöperation, not only for the poor, but for ourselves as well, but with small success."

"The chief objection, I suppose," said Mildred, "is, that when food is cooked in large quantities it never tastes so good. In time everything seems to get a sort of boarding-house flavor, and individual tastes cannot be consulted as in one's own home. This may be made an objection by the rich, but that a fastidiousness about a flavor should prevent people from trying coöperation, who have all they can do to keep soul and body together, seems to me more than ridiculous."

"It is more than ridiculous, and I for one have faith that people can be taught to see it," said the blond young man with the clear, crisp speech. "The people who have lived in the model tenement houses have already learned to use dumb-waiters, speaking-tubes, set tubs, ash-shutes, and the like, and have seen the advantages of these modern conveniences. Now, with patience on our part and a painstaking explanation of your scheme, I think that they could be led to see the saving in time, fuel, space, money, and quality of food as well as the increased variety of food and cleanliness incident to an arrangement such as you propose, and which I heartily hope you will carry out. The thing to do, as Octavia Hill in her work in London has wisely taught us, is to make sure that we put in the right sort of men and women to manage such a place. As she once said, 'We have more model tenements than we know how to take care of. My present work is to train women who will go down and oversee them.'

"If, beside the man who is employed to attend to the business part of it and to see that the sanitary condition is good, you will also put in one or two nice American women who will look after the families in a friendly way, giving suggestions and advice with tact, and carefully explaining the advantages of improvements, I will vouch for the success of the experiment. If some object, there are enough people of common sense in the city to fill one house at least."

"It seems to me," said one speaker, "that we ought to be careful about talking or even allowing ourselves to think of those whom we call the 'lower classes' as being essentially different from ourselves. They are ignorant, of course, and dreadfully shiftless, some of them, but they have the same instincts and affections as we, and I for one respect their individuality and their privacy as I would our own. I should n't like to ask them to do anything I would n't do myself under similar circumstances. If *we* are n't ready for coöperation, how can we expect them to be?"

"I ask nothing of any one," replied Mildred, "which I would not be glad to do myself under the same conditions, or under better conditions. We are learning to coöperate in a thousand ways of which our grandfathers never dreamed. Under the pressure of new duties and interests which our age has brought with it, we are learning to eliminate useless individual work where combined work is better. The law of reciprocity is the divine law. Wasteful individual effort belongs to the age of savagery. Communism, the mingling of families, and absence of personal privacy can never I am convinced be tolerated by civilized people; but coöperation with one's fellows in harnessing up the forces of nature to subserve our material interests and leave man more free for the development of his higher nature, seems to me the only rational thing for rational beings. Any reluctance to see and accept this seems to me the result of prejudice."

"I should put it even a little stronger than that," said Professor Adler, gently. "Under every objection which has been presented to me by the friends with whom I have for years been laboring in this very line of effort, I have felt that there was not mere prejudice but a real, unconscious selfishness. All objections like the one you mention are mere matters of detail which could be properly adjusted, and the freedom of the wife from all petty details that eat up the greater part of her life ought to more-than compensate for the slight sacrifice of feeling involved in doing an unaccustomed thing. I believe that we shall gradually come to it; and meanwhile our boarding-houses and hotels will shelter larger and larger numbers of women driven from housekeeping by the weight of domestic cares. They will have lost their home in losing their cook!"

CHAPTER IX.

FIFTH AVENUE HOTEL.

DEAR ALICE: What an age it seems since I left Boston and exchanged the peace and quiet of my dear old attic room for all this turmoil and whirl of excitement! I have done more thinking in the last two months than ever before in my life, and sometimes I feel as though every idea had been squeezed out of my brain. If it were not that I insist upon getting some hours every week for a canter in the park, I fear I should be in a state of nervous collapse. However, I am beginning to see my way clear, and hope to get away in a month or so and be off to the West. Then when I get a conscience tolerably clear I shall run riot like a school-boy out of school.

Just now I am buried deep in tenement-house problems. I have had two or three conclaves of all the wiseacres I could get together, and I have been considering their criticisms and suggestions, until now the details of my scheme are pretty nearly complete, and I sign the papers with my architect and builder to-night.

You know about the plan for coöperative cooking which I used to discourse upon to you to your infinite amusement. Well, half of the people here opposed it at first just as you did. They said, for one thing, that no one under heaven would be able to provide the kind of food that would suit all tastes. There would be Jews who would want to have meat killed after their own fashion; the Italians would want horrid messes of garlic; the Irish would find fault if they did n't have the finest white bread and the strongest of tea, and not a blessed one of them would eat oatmeal, the coarse cereals, nutritious soups, or any of the suitable things that they ought to eat.

All of which is more or less true, as I had wit enough to know myself beforehand; but I don't mean to let it daunt me. I shall let all my tenants have an Atkinson kerosene stove in their rooms, if they wish to pay for it, and on this they can do an endless amount of cooking at a trifling cost for fuel, and a great saving of space as well as of heat in summer.

I have engaged one of the graduates of Mrs. Lincoln's cooking school to take my first kitchen in charge. Meantime, until the buildings are ready, I am going to send her to study the system of marketing and cooking for hotels; also the kinds of food which each nationality likes, and the methods of its preparation.

The kitchen will be arranged under her special supervision. She will engage her own assistants and be the responsible head. She will have a schedule of cooked dishes, with prices of each displayed on a bulletin in the corridors. Special dishes will be cooked by request, and orders for food can be sent in the day before. Of course at first there may be a little waste until she gets familiar with the people and can anticipate their wants; but she is a smart Yankee girl, and has a good-natured, merry way with her which I am sure will win recognition. I have told her to make it her first point to please the people, and when that is accomplished she can gradually teach them to drink milk instead of tea, and to eat brown bread instead of soda crackers.

One objection which was brought up was that children would have no chance to learn cooking, never seeing their mothers cook; but I said, that not one woman in ten of those I have in mind knows how to cook either in a cleanly or economical way. They have but little variety in their cooking, moreover, and I thought the loss of the instruction which might be imparted would be largely counterbalanced by the knowledge which would be gained as to what well-cooked food tasted like.

The *modus operandi* of getting the food will be something like this. At half-past six, Biddy Flanigan, who has to go out scrubbing at seven o'clock, will deposit a dime with her teapot and an empty dish in the dumb-waiter; she will call up through the speaking-tube that she wants tea, fried potatoes, and three rolls; and in about seventy seconds the dish full of potatoes done to a turn, and not soaked in fat, and a pot full of tea will be at her elbow. From these and the nice home-made rolls, neither burned nor sour nor underdone, she and little Patsy and Maggie will have a hot breakfast.

Then Maggie will wash the dishes with the hot water running at the sink; there will have been no ashes to dump, or clinkers to pick out; no fuel to be brought, or fire made; and Biddy can put on her hood and depart, knowing that the children will not open all the draughts and waste the coal, or set themselves on fire, or let the fire go out, and come home from school to a dinner of cold scraps, with the necessity of building up the fire again at night. For with a nickel in the dumb-waiter at noon, and a tin can containing two big bowls full of hot soup, the children will be well provided for.

I have some little plans for the arrangements of rooms which I hope will work well. The beds of the tenement houses have always been a great trouble to me. Of all clumsy and unsanitary arrangements for sleeping when one is obliged to sleep with four or five others in a small room, ordinary bedsteads seem to me the worst. Now in order to introduce all the improvements that I want, I am obliged to economize space. The people must be crowded together, there is no other way out of that; so, for the children, I mean to put up single beds, berth-fashion, over each other. Strong iron sockets fastened to the wall will hold an iron frame on which a little mattress with bedclothes will be strapped. In the daytime these will be turned up, one under the other, and hooked against the wall, out of the way, and a neat little curtain fastened to the upper one will hang down and conceal both as if they were a set of hanging shelves. At night the youngster in the upper berth will be protected from all danger of falling out by two or three leather straps fastened on to the upper part of the berth and hooked firmly to the lower edge of the framework. I have thought all the details out one by one as various objections were made to my scheme.

I think this plan a fine solution for the dirt and vermin question. Besides, the mattresses, being so small, could be very much more easily aired and turned than if they were larger. But an agent, to whom I explained it, protested, saying she would n't encourage such an idea at all. "People ought to live properly, in regular fashion, and not get used to putting up with any such makeshifts as that. It would n't be living naturally."

"You old bigot!" said I inwardly, "your grandmother, I suppose, would have protested against sleeping-cars and elevators and dumb-waiters as being unnatural and artificial!"

I am amazed every day to see how densely stupid some sensible people are. I know a Frenchwoman who has always slept at home on a bed four feet high, canopied and enshrouded with curtains. It is half a day's work to make it, and she feels out in the cold and all forlorn when put into one of our little, open, low, brass bedsteads. I suppose she would think it quite as unhomelike and as demoralizing in its tendency as my agent thought my berth beds would be.

The other day I explained the idea to a poor woman in a tenement house, who with the greatest difficulty was trying to sweep under two good-sized bedsteads in a tiny room. At first she did not seem to comprehend, but when she did, she smiled and nodded and said, "I like that, Mees; easy to sweep; children no kick each other all time; my children sleep four in one bed — too much kick and cry."

I have thought of another thing, that is, of having low, stationary settees made in suitable places against the wall, and having the seat a cover which would turn up on hinges, showing space underneath where clothes and all sorts of things could be kept out of sight, instead of being put into trunks or left to lie around in an untidy way. I shall have no closets, as I find that space can be better saved and cleanliness more readily enforced by building stationary wardrobes, each with a drawer underneath and shelves above extending to the ceiling. Closets, I find, are rarely swept.

On these shelves, which can be protected by a curtain, things not in frequent use can be laid away, and every inch of space to the ceiling utilized. I know you will not approve of this. You think closets are a *sine qua non;* all of which is well enough if you are dealing with people who are sure to keep them swept clean, and where room is not so precious. But in this case I am planning to economize space to the utmost, and at the same time give the number of hooks for hanging clothes that there is in the ordinary closet.

The rooms are to be only seven feet high, thereby saving much space and making it possible for me to put on another story to the building. Without this, by the closest planning, I could not afford all the conveniences that I want and get my four per cent. interest, which, for the success of the experiment, I feel bound to make.

Of course these low-studded rooms would give too little air were it not that I have taken extraordinary pains about the ventilation. I have been using all my feminine ingenuity to devise all possible means to provide the greatest amount of comfort and convenience for the smallest possible amount of money and space. Understand that I am aiming to provide a decent home for the very poorest, who cannot afford to pay more than five dollars a month for rent. I mean to give them as much room as they have now in their dirty, dark alleys and attics, and in addition to that, warmth, pure air, cleanliness, and the saving of countless steps.

I find my architects strangely unsuggestive about all this ; they have not enough imagination to put themselves in the place of a tired ignorant woman who has to spend all her life in two rooms with her husband and four or five untidy, restless children.

Knowing how much afraid of the dark many of my North End people used to be, and remembering how they used to keep a lamp burning all night in their sleeping-rooms, where the windows were shut tight, I have planned to have the upper eight inches of the walls of the room bordering on the hall, of glass, which can be opened like a transom, to admit air and much light at night from the lights in the hall, which I shall myself provide. I mean also to have in every room, fastened against the wall, a stationary table that can be put up or let down like an ordinary table-leaf.

I am going to have some experienced woman oversee all these little details, for I never yet saw a builder who could not learn a great deal from a practical housekeeper.

In the basement there are to be bath-rooms and a barber's shop, while in some part of the building I shall have a large room which can be divided by sliding-doors. One part shall be a nursery, where mothers who want to go out can leave their children in good charge for a trifling fee, and the other half of the room shall be used as a kindergarten.

In the evening these rooms will be occupied by the grown people for club meetings and a reading-room. When desired, both rooms can be thrown together for a lecture or entertainment.

I have in mind sewing schools and gymnastic classes and all sorts of good things, for which this will be the centre.

I am more and more convinced that the quickest way to revolutionize whatever needs revolutionizing in this world is to get at the hearts and souls of people. Open a man's heart, give him an idea, in other words, convert him, and self-respect, industry, and good manners will soon appear.

I think I have found just the right man and woman to help me make my scheme feasible. They are a couple about fifty years old, Pennsylvania Quakers, whose daughter has just been graduated from Professor Adler's kindergarten training-school, and who is bubbling over with zeal to begin her work. All three are to live in the building and give their whole time to the work that may be needed, each one having his or her separate department to attend to, and being responsible for everything in that department. For all this a good salary will be paid to each of the three.

I have found that my original plan has grown on my hands, and as it is often easier to do a thing on a large scale than on a small one, I have decided to put up four large buildings around a hollow square, each one to contain one hundred sets of tenements of from one to four rooms. Each house will accommodate perhaps four or five hundred people. Most of the suites will contain two rooms suitable for a family of four. But I shall have also many single rooms for bachelors, there being a good demand for them, I find.

You know my enthusiasm for our Puritan history. Behold my opportunity to indulge my taste in that direction! I am going to christen these hobbies of mine, so long a dream, now so soon to be materialized, by bestowing upon them some good old names that ought never to be forgotten. These four are to be called the "Pilgrim Homes." One will be named Scrooby, another Leyden, one

Plymouth, and one the Mayflower. If these prove successful I shall have four more, named Bradford, Brewster, Carver, and Winslow. However, I must not romance, for that perhaps will be far in the future.

You have no idea of the endless details I have had to consider. I have been over every single model tenement I could find in New York and Brooklyn, which is not saying much, for there are not many. Now, although not a stone is yet laid, I feel as if a load had rolled off my shoulders and the thing were nearly complete.

I shall watch with the greatest anxiety the outcome of this experiment. If it can be shown, as I think it can, that the lowest poor can be comfortably housed at the prices which they now pay for their wretched slums, and if it can be demonstrated, as I think it can, that health and happiness increase and vice decreases in proportion to the opportunity which is offered for decent living, then I shall be ready to devote a goodly number of my millions to what seems to me about the best use that can be made of them.

As soon as it can be fully proved just what needs to be done, if a state or city loan can be obtained, I mean to try to persuade some of these wealthy men and women whom I have been meeting of late to join with me and engage in the work of tenement-house reform on a gigantic scale. There is no good reason why the crying evils which now exist should be perpetuated another year. Since planning all this I have been greatly interested to learn of what Glasgow has recently been doing in this direction; buying up and destroying a mass of vile old rookeries, and building sanitary homes for the poor in place of them.

There is money enough, brains enough, and good will enough in this city to abolish these hideous conditions of life by which thousands of lives are wrecked every year. I am very doubtful about much state socialism; but municipal socialism to this extent seems to me the only rational thing in view of the present evils. A century hence we shall look back with wonder that our mania for individualism and dread of governmental interference should have led us to tolerate these things a day. I was never more convinced of anything than of this, and never more terribly in earnest about anything in my life. Meanwhile my agents are buying up and cleansing some of the worst old tenement houses in the city, and I am searching in every direction for the right person to put in charge of them. I find that this is the most important feature of it all. There must be constant, tireless supervision, and I find that it really pays to give one good tenant his rent free on condition that he keep the building clean and orderly. He must, of course, be one who has enough moral power to enforce all necessary rules.

These details must sound very prosaic to you, I fear, in comparison with all the delightful things which you are studying; but just at present I am finding the subject of dumb-waiters and ash-shoots quite as fascinating as I ever used to find Correggios or cryptogamia.

By the way, I am going to see a beautiful private car which is to be sold. I am thinking of buying it and taking aunt Madison and some delightful people whom I know on a trip to the Yellowstone Park and Puget Sound this summer. What do you say to joining us? By the time you have finished at the Annex you will be ready to drop, and will be quite unfit to think of getting up your trousseau. Tell that impatient young professor that he must wait for three months, and give you a chance to know how sweet it is to get a love-letter when it comes three thousand miles. . . .

FIFTH AVENUE HOTEL, NEW YORK, *Apr.* 10.

TO CHAS. W. TURNER, ESQ., Boston, Mass.

Dear Sir, — Your letter has come to hand with the inclosed deed for the eight lots on Huntington Avenue, each twenty-three by one hundred feet.

I will now write you in detail about the buildings which I wish to put upon those lots. I want you to understand my plans exactly, together with my reasons for them, as I shall ask you to take the responsibility of carrying them out.

I want to try an experiment that I have long had in mind. I hope to have it pay a fair per cent. and at the same time serve as a hint toward the solution of some of the difficulties in the problems of modern housekeeping.

For the last twenty years we have been blundering our way toward better methods of meeting the exigencies of our modern city life, but with indifferent success.

However, one thing is certain. In our great cities, where land is growing more and more expensive, and where people are swarming in constantly increasing numbers, building their houses higher and higher into the air, something must be done to readjust the methods of living, if life is to remain anything but drudgery to a large majority of wives and mothers.

The modern system of "flats" is a step in the right direction, but thus far it has meant cramped quarters, great expense, and many disadvantages, and I am convinced that it is a long way from being the city home of the future.

What I propose is to put up some houses where all the rooms in each suite of apartments shall be on the same floor, but which shall in no other particular resemble any "flats" that I have seen.

I have found none where the rooms were spacious and all directly lighted and ventilated from the outer air, unless they were at a price quite beyond the income of a man who must live on three thousand dollars' salary. Even the best I have seen, although they are elegantly frescoed and finished, are sure to have some small dark rooms, and give much less good space for living purposes than a house bearing the same rental.

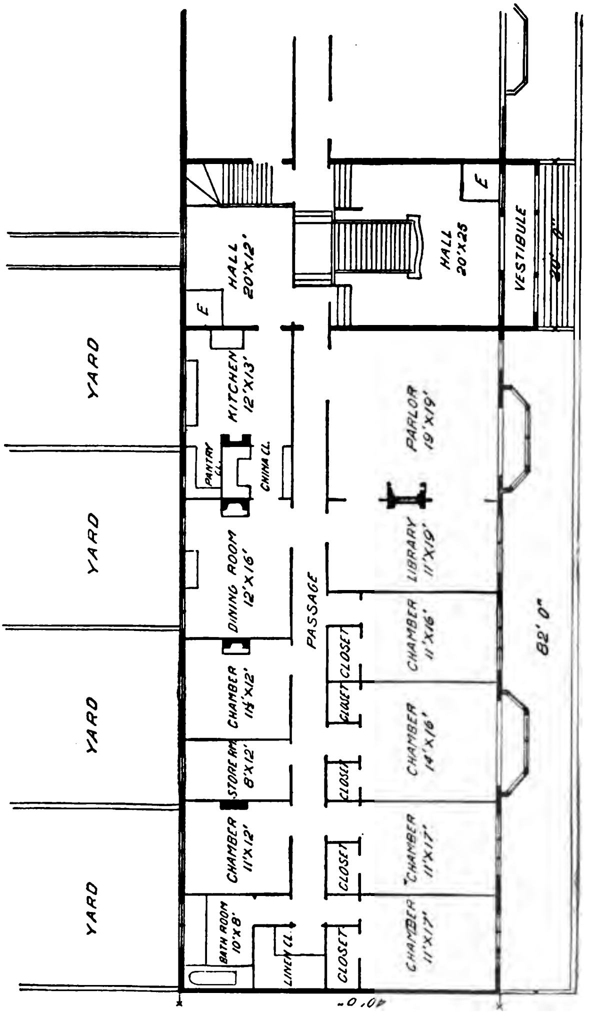
Now I think there is no reason for this, — that is to say, no necessary reason; nothing more in fact than that the demand for "flats" exceeds the supply, and landlords make more on an investment in that direction.

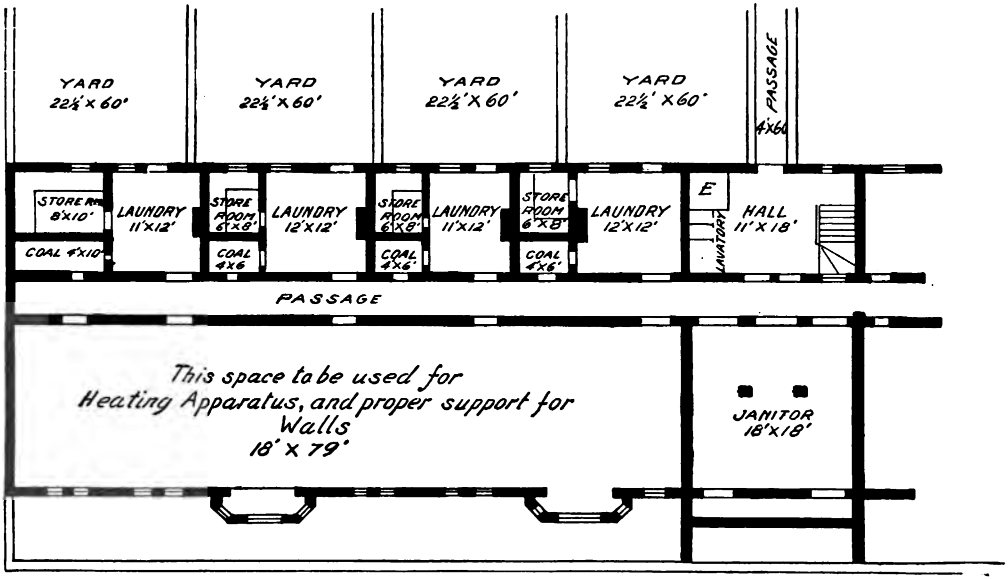
The never ceasing trouble with servants, the burden of entertaining company, the fearful strain of the stairs incident to living in a house where there are only two good rooms on a floor, — all these and other things are more and more compelling people of moderate means either to board or live in a "flat," where one servant can do the work for which, in an ordinary house, two would be required.

I think the continual increase of boarding-houses marks a sign of decadence in American social and home life, and yet I do not blame delicate women for longing for freedom from the details of work, which is often done at a great disadvantage, and for immunity from the back-breaking stairs and other things that are the cause of so much invalidism.

Seeing these domestic problems and the wear and tear of the nervous system contingent on the ordinary methods of city housekeeping, I have determined to try in this experiment to see if for a moderate cost, say nine or ten hundred dollars rental, it may not be possible to supply a family with twelve good-sized rooms all on one floor, and with the back yard of a size which is usual to an ordinary house.

One great objection to the ordinary flat is the absence of a back yard where clothes can be dried,


YARD
YARD
YARD
YARD
HALL 20'X12'
E
KITCHEN 12'X13'
PANTRY CL.
CHINA CL.
DINING ROOM 12'X16'
CHAMBER 11½'X12'
STORE RM. 8'X12'
CHAMBER 11'X12'
BATH ROOM 10'X8'
LINEN CL.
PASSAGE
CLOSET
CLOSET
CLOSET
CLOSET
CLOSET
CHAMBER 11'X17'
CHAMBER 11'X17'
CHAMBER 14'X16'
CHAMBER 11'X16'
LIBRARY 11'X19'
PARLOR 19'X19'
HALL 20'X25
E
VESTIBULE
20' 0"
82' 0"
40' 0"


YARD
22½' X 60'
YARD
22½' X 60'
YARD
22½' X 60'
YARD
22½' X 60'
PASSAGE
4X60
STORE RM
8'X10'
COAL 4'X10'
LAUNDRY
11'X12'
STORE ROOM
6'X8'
COAL
4X6
LAUNDRY
12'X12'
STORE ROOM
6'X8'
COAL
4X6'
LAUNDRY
11'X12'
STORE ROOM
6'X8'
COAL
4X6'
LAUNDRY
12'X12'
E
LAVATORY
HALL
11'X18'
PASSAGE
This space to be used for
Heating Apparatus, and proper support for
Walls
18' X 79'
JANITOR
18'X18'

and children can play. Families with children find but little freedom and comfort in the ordinary flat, and I propose to remedy this in the simplest way in the world, — at least, it seems perfectly simple and feasible to me. If the architect you engage makes any objections to the scheme, let me know what they are.

Taking the eight lots which you have purchased, each one hundred feet deep, let us devote say sixty feet to the back yards. This will admit of flower-beds, and a little playground, a very important item with a mother of young children. These dimensions are the same as those of hundreds of South End lots and houses.

Then there will be left for the building of the eight homes an area of eight lots, each forty feet deep and twenty-three feet wide.

According to our ordinary wasteful system in the building of houses vertically there would be eight sets of stone steps, eight doors and lobbies, and allowing four stories to each house, there would be four halls and three staircases, one over the other, in each of the eight houses. Each hall would involve more or less expense in carpeting, much time in sweeping and keeping clean ; and beside, much physical energy would be wasted in simply getting from dining-room to parlor and from parlor to bedroom.

Now it seems to me that instead of building these eight houses side by side vertically, like so many bricks set up on end, we can do much better.

We can abolish seven of our doorsteps and entrance ways and use one entrance for all, making it thereby much handsomer, and, if we choose, seven times more expensive. Then instead of eight times three flights of stairs we shall have simply three, one over the other, in a broad central hall which will run from the street to the back yard, having four tenements on either side of it, one tenement for each story. The floors separating the tenements will be made as impervious to sound as the partitions in houses built in the usual vertical fashion. The central hall can be divided into two parts: a front hall containing a passenger elevator and a handsome flight of stairs, and a back hall with another flight of stairs and another elevator, the latter for servants and freight. With the same amount of money that would have been required for building and carpeting the extra stairs, these halls and staircases can be made handsomer and absolutely fireproof. On the top story, instead of the inconvenient ladder and trap-door leading to the roof, which is usual in our vertically built tenements, there can be a comfortable staircase, covered at the point where it reaches the roof and giving exit through a door upon the roof, which can be thoroughly guarded by a parapet or iron fence, thus affording a safe playground for children.

This will cost something, of course, but no more I think than would be expended in the ordinary, wasteful method of building to which we resort at present.

Now perhaps you will say that with the exception of the back yards this is not different from the ordinary apartment hotel; but wait a bit. What I propose to do is to give to each person a suite of rooms equal in cubical contents to what he would have had in his vertical four-story house, and I shall arrange these rooms so that he shall have a frontage on the street, not of twenty-three feet, but of ninety-two feet minus ten feet which he will allow for the central hall. As his neighbor across the hall will have the same frontage and also allow ten feet for the hall, the latter, you see, will be a spacious apartment twenty feet in width.

Think of a flat having eighty-two feet of front, and with a set of four back yards at the rear of each home, which is an area of sixty by eighty-two feet! To be sure each one cannot use all that area. He will have only one fourth of it for his special use, but it will be worth something to have all that space ostensibly his own, and the outlook a little different from each room.

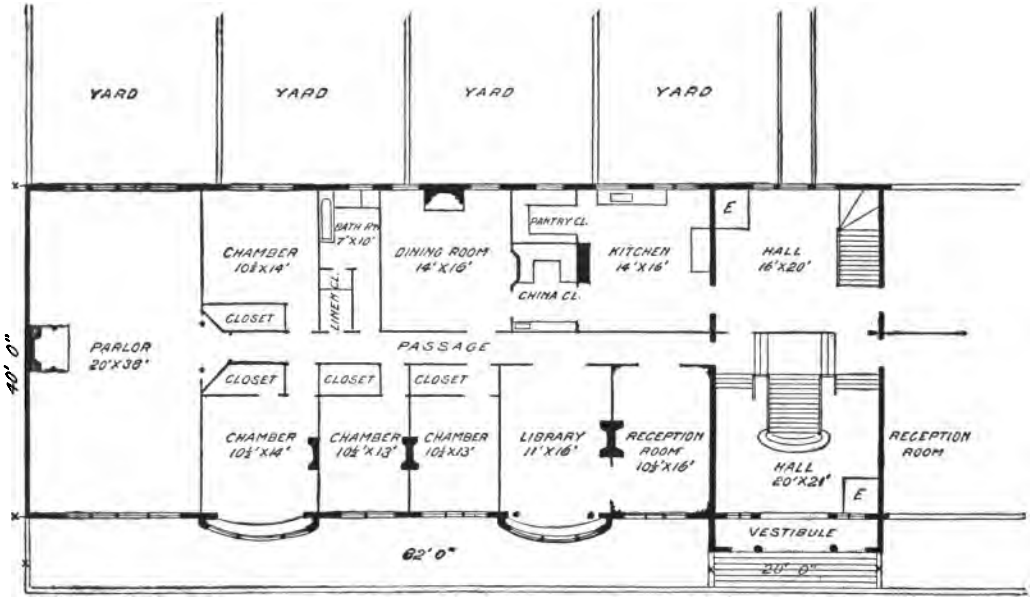
Of course your first question will be as to how these yards are to be reached.

My first purpose is to have these eight families who dwell under the same roof use nothing but their halls and staircases in common. So in the basement each family shall have a space at the rear of the house, twenty-three feet in width, each having its own exit into its own yard from the laundry and store-rooms which will be situated there. In the front part of the basement, where in the average Boston house the coal and furnace are usually found, will be the heating appliances for the whole building, and heat will be provided in the different stories as it is in the ordinary hotel.

There will be speaking-tubes, of course, connecting each laundry with its kitchen above, so that the mistress on the fourth floor can communicate with her Bridget in the laundry, and the only disadvantage will be that once a week the Bridget living on the top story will have to descend four flights in the elevator to reach her laundry instead of running down one flight of stairs, as she would do in the house of the ordinary type.

Although I prefer to leave the arrangement of rooms in the suites to the taste of the architect, I will inclose a plan — the simplest possible one which, so far as I know, will be thoroughly convenient. The only objection to it that I can discover is, that it is rather stiff and monotonous; but, as the same thing must be said of our houses as at present constructed, I do not think this a very formidable objection. However, I send a second plan, which will show how it is possible to introduce considerable variety in the arrangement of rooms. In this, as you see, the parlor is placed at the end of the hall, and is thirty-eight feet long, being lighted at both ends. If it should be thought best, half of the suites, *i. e.*, the four on one side of the hall, can be built after this second plan.

The central passage-way running between the rooms in each suite will receive light through tran-


YARD
YARD
YARD
YARD
CHAMBER 10½'X14'
BATH RM 7'X10'
DINING ROOM 14'X16'
PANTRY CL.
CHINA CL.
KITCHEN 14'X16'
E
HALL 16'X20'
LINEN CL.
CLOSET
PARLOR 20'X38'
PASSAGE
CLOSET
CLOSET
CLOSET
CHAMBER 10½'X14'
CHAMBER 10½'X13'
CHAMBER 10½'X13'
LIBRARY 11'X16'
RECEPTION ROOM 10½'X16'
HALL 20'X21'
E
RECEPTION ROOM
VESTIBULE
20' 0"
62' 0"
40' 0"

soms and glass doors, and will be lighter than the halls in the average city house.

As the kitchen does not communicate with this central passage-way, the odors of cooking will not be so likely to permeate the house as they usually do in the average Boston house with a basement dining-room.

If I have made myself clear, I think you will see that, according to this extremely simple plan of construction, the chief advantages of the average flat and the average separate block house may be combined, and the disadvantages of each nearly eliminated.

The care of the sidewalk, stairs, central hall, and the management of the heating apparatus, will be in the charge of a janitor, as is customary in the ordinary apartment hotel, thus almost doing away with the work of one servant in each family. In addition to the great advantage of having all the rooms on one floor, these rooms will be larger and more airy than in the ordinary block house. Then, too, they will not only be more in number than those in the average flat, but they will be more than in the vertical house of the same cubical contents. For the space heretofore devoted to stairs can now be utilized for living-rooms, and by simply opening the doors and windows a draught of air can sweep straight through from front to back of the house. There will be neither dark rooms nor rooms opening into a dismal brick air-well, as in most of our modern flats, and, consequently, none of that cramped, confined feeling that one always experiences when going into their tiny rooms which seem designed for a family of three members only, and where children have no right to be.

Now I propose to offer this horizontal dwelling, with its eighty-two feet front, and its yard at the back, with all its economy of space and expense and physical exertion, for *precisely the same rental* that the vertical house with its twenty-three feet of front would cost.

And, as I want permanent tenants, and desire to make them practically the same offer as a sale of the property would be, you may give, to any one who desires it, a lease for fifteen or twenty years.

Doubtless before that time has expired we shall come to see that our methods of living must be modified still more, and separate kitchens and laundries will be relegated to the country, while some system of coöperation will come into vogue in our cities. If so, such a house as I propose to build can be easily modified to suit the new order of things. The kitchens above could be metamorphosed into bedrooms, and part of the space in the basement turned into a cooking centre for all the families.

If this experiment should prove a success, — and I can see no reason now why it should not, — this will be but the beginning of what I intend to do on a large scale. I think I can do no better service for the hurried, overworked wives and mothers of our great cities, than to simplify and lighten the burdens of housekeeping, by adding to their comfort without adding to their expense.

I want very little frescoing and gilding in these houses; but there must be fire-escapes at the rear, and every device for convenience that is available.

In regard to their outward appearance I have but one suggestion to make. I should like to have the windows very broad and very low. It has always seemed to me ridiculous to note the pains which is taken to cut a hole in the wall and then immediately cover up two thirds of it in the most elaborate manner with lambrequins and two or three sets of curtains, all of which are never raised above the middle sash except when the servant washes the glass. If it is desirable to admit a little subdued light near the top of the room, this might be done by a few panes of stained or ground glass, which would not be covered by a curtain. On the exterior the bricks or stone, arranged in the form of an arch over each window, would add much to the beauty of effect.

If a window were five feet wide by three and a half high, the top being no more than six and a half feet from the floor, the curtain question would be somewhat simplified and our rooms made sunnier and more beautiful. However, I leave this to the architect to decide.

You will, I think, get my idea from the accompanying sketches.

Yours sincerely,

MILDRED BREWSTER.

CHAPTER X.

In achieving spiritual emancipation the mind must pass from prescription to conscious reason, from mere faith to knowledge. There must be nothing lost in the transition, only a gain in the form of science to what was before held in the form of faith and tradition. But this transition is the most painful one in history, although its results are the most glorious. — WM. T. HARRIS, LL. D.

ONE evening Mildred and I had prepared for bed, and in our dressing-gowns were sitting cosily before our open wood fire, watching the flames dance and flicker and cast weird shadows on the wall. It had been a hard day, the morning having been spent in writing and dictation and in examining a half bushel of mail matter; the afternoon we had spent in visiting tenement houses and industrial schools in Brooklyn.

After dinner, however, I had beguiled Mildred into a merry hour over some dashing Schubert duets, for music never failed to rest and soothe her. Then, turning the lights down and drawing the *tête-à-tête* before the red glow of the firelight, we fell to talking, indulging in many reminiscences of childish pranks and schoolgirl sentimentality.

I had been bred outside of New England, and our lives had been wholly unlike. Perhaps it was because we were so very unlike in many things that we were more and more drawn to each other day by day, finding ever new delight in exploring each other's history and thoughts.

I had seen more of the world, in a certain way, than Mildred, — that is, more of society, in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington. The leisurely, easy-going life of a people to whom New England ideas and "isms" were unknown had been the limits of my social, and Presbyterianism and Episcopacy the limits of my spiritual, horizon. I had scarcely dreamed of the existence of any other way of looking at life among people in good society.

A brisk canter on my red roan, with a gay company of young people, a good dinner party, plenty of bouquets and dancing and young men, with now and then a would-be-serious talk with some of the more studiously-minded of them apropos of German poetry or Victor Hugo, — this life I had known all about, and but little of any other.

However, eight months previously, when reverses of fortune had cast my fate in Salem, Massachusetts, among a family of Unitarians who had been old-time abolitionists, and were now woman suffragists and zealous reformers in every direction, my conception of life had enlarged a little, and I was prepared not to be amazed at this radical, bookish Boston girl who upset all my previous theories of what a charming woman should be.

She was charming; no one who had seen her sitting there, in her loose gown of a delicate rose color, her dark wavy hair falling around her shoulders as she gazed steadily into the glowing embers, her fine features outlined by the firelight, but would have thought her so. We had been laughing heartily over some droll accounts of my first New England experiences and the horror which I had aroused in some precise old maids by my frivolity, while I had been equally horrified by their radical theology. I thought that it was wicked for them to read Renan, and they thought it sinful for me to wear French corsets and moderately high heels.

After a time Mildred and I began to talk of love and lovers, as girls will. I say "girls," though I was six-and-twenty and she my senior. But in New England, where late marriages are the rule and not the exception, the term "girls," as I have discovered, has an indefinite application.

"Mildred, were you never in love?" I asked.

I should n't have dared quite so much as that, only somehow she had invited my confidence, and I had told her all about my love affairs. I could n't tell whether she blushed or not, for the firelight glowed on her face. At first I thought that she was offended, for she waited a minute before she answered, and we listened to the rain coming in great gusts against the window pane, and the omnibuses rattling over the paved street below.

Mildred nestled a little closer to the fire and adjusted her cushions. Then she said slowly, as she stretched out her slender fingers before the blaze, "Why, yes, I suppose I really was in love, though I did n't know it at the time."

"Good heavens, Mildred, not with Mr. Dunreath!" I cried; "you told me you never really cared for him."

"No, not with Mr. Dunreath," replied Mildred quickly, and throwing her head back she clasped her hands over her knee, swaying back and forth in the firelight. Then she stopped again. I asked no more questions, for there was a look in her eyes and a droop to the sensitive mouth which meant I knew not what. Was it possible that this woman, who seemed so enthusiastically absorbed in her plans and so cheerful and gay, was really carrying about with her a secret heart-ache? I had watched her curiously as we had been in society together, and had been amused at her absolute lack of coquetry and matter-of-fact way of talking with gentlemen, and, on the other hand, at her semi-consciousness that she must try not to say too much about her theories and hobbies, and to "learn to talk small talk," as she said. I, who had had my fill of small talk, and whom the late years were beginning to teach some serious lessons, liked much better her simplicity and unusual earnestness about things. Her bookishness, too, which at first I had rather dreaded, did not mean pedantry or dullness. She had read but few books, she told me; far less than I. She once showed me in her diary her list of books for the past year. There were only six: Plato's "Republic," "Wilhelm Meister," Stanley's "History of the Jews," Thackeray's "Newcomes," Henry George's "Progress and Poverty," and a volume of Fichte.

"I like to be acquainted with the best people," she once said; "there is no reason why one should put up with the second-rate ones when one can have the best."

"But it is not every one who can get the best society," said I, not understanding in the least what she meant.

"Every one who can read can have the best friends of all ages," she replied. And they were her friends. But I am digressing.

"I will tell you all about it," said Mildred, with her eyes still fixed on the coals. "There is no reason why I should not, though I never told any one before, and I have hardly acknowledged it to myself. I think I was in love; yes, I think I really was — in love.

"It happened in this way. I had gone down to the Fitchburg station to take the early morning train for Concord. By the way, were you ever at Concord?" she asked abruptly.

"What?" I answered, "Concord, New Hampshire?"

"No, our own Massachusetts Concord; the Concord of Emerson and Hawthorne and Thoreau and the Alcotts. I had been there but once before, but since that time it has been a sort of Mecca of mine, and I have made many a pilgrimage there.

"I was going out to the Concord School of Philosophy, not, however, for any special reason. I did n't know and did n't care to know anything about philosophy, but I thought it might be fun to see for once the long-haired men and short-haired women congregate and talk, as the papers said, about the 'thisness of the then and the whichness of the where.' Besides, I wanted to visit Hawthorne's grave. I was full of his romances then.

"At the station I met my bosom-friend Julia Mason. 'How fortunate!' she exclaimed. 'Here is my cousin, bound for the Summer School, too. You must philosophize together.' She introduced us to each other, and then hastened to take her own train, while the young man and I made our way together to the express train for Concord.

"He pleased my fancy at once. I was just at the age when a girl always sees a possible lover in every handsome young man whom she chances to know. Not that the thought occurred to me then, for he was far from being the ideal lover whom I had dreamed of marrying. My lover must combine all the graces of an Alcibiades with the virtues of a Bayard, a knight *sans peur et sans reproche*, with classic features, curling locks, and a voice and smile that should melt the very stones."

"You matter-of-fact old Mildred," I laughed. "To think of your ever being so romantic!"

She smiled a little as she unclasped her hands from her knee and leaned back.

"Yes," she said, "I had my dreams once."

Then she continued:

"He was older than I, twenty-five, perhaps; tall, broad-shouldered, a manly man every inch of him; a little clumsy and awkward at first, and lacking in all the manifold little attentions which girls like. He did not offer to carry my bag, I observed, and he entered the car-door first. He was certainly not in the least like the courteous, gallant knight of my girlish fancy.

"But presently, as he began to talk in an animated way, his frank blue eyes lighted up and lent to his by no means classic features a wonderful charm. We got well acquainted on the short journey. He, it seems, had, like myself, been at Concord only once before. It was on that raw, cold day in '75, when I, a young school-girl, with my mother, and he a Phillips Academy boy, had, unknown to each other, essayed to board the train in that same frightfully thronged station, and go to the Centennial celebration.

"I told him of my droll experience, wedged in between a dozen men and women in the smoking-car. He, it seems, was not so fortunate as I, for he took no lunch, and, like thousands of others who could buy nothing for either love or money, almost starved. I told him about our experience: how we marched with the women assembled at the town hall, led by a lady with a little flag, around the road to the tent on Battle lawn; how there we were nearly annihilated by the throng, and how at last by some good fortune I was borne up to the platform's very edge, and stood there within a few feet of Grant and all his cabinet, and with Curtis, Emerson, and Lowell all within arm's reach.

"How my heart beat at the sight of those faces!

I have seen many famous sights since, but nothing that ever stirred my blood like that," said Mildred, with glowing eyes. "I was scarcely more than a child, Ruby, but I stood there for two mortal hours, unable to move forward or backward, to right or left, quivering from head to foot with enthusiasm and excitement. That day my American patriotism was born. I had studied a little text-book at school, and learned names and dates; but not until under the spell of Curtis's eloquence, and face to face with the men whose fathers had shed their blood in the brave fight one hundred years before, did I begin to realize what it all meant. I remember particularly a little old man with weather-beaten face, clad in a simple suit,—his 'Sunday best,'—who stood beside me listening with eager, upturned face, his blue eyes filled with unshed tears. I could see his lips quiver; and once, as if carried away by the fervor of his emotion, he grasped my arm with his brown, withered hand and whispered huskily, 'Little girl, when you get as old as I be, you 'll understand what all this means.'

"Since then," said Mildred gravely, "the words 'my country' have meant something new to me. A distinctly new idea took hold of me, an idea that some time I hope to make blossom into deeds."

I confess I was getting a little impatient for an account of the love-making, and this did not sound much like it. But after musing a bit, Mildred continued:

"This little experience which my companion and

I had in common made us quickly acquainted. He frankly told me of his college life and of himself. He had been studying for the ministry, he said, though whether he was to be a clergyman or not I inferred was somewhat doubtful.

"We passed Walden Pond, gleaming like silver in the sunshine, and he talked of Thoreau, whom he seemed to know well, though I had at that time read nothing of him. Presently we rolled up to the Concord station, and while a crowd of people alighted and took the 'barge,' we went down one of the long, shady streets, bordered by tall hedges and close-clipped lawns, with comfortable, roomy mansions set back from the street; past the little gem of a town library, on its carpet of emerald green; past the cluster of shops and the cool-plashing fountain, and down the famous old road which saw the redcoats' flight, and which Hosea Biglow, you remember, says he 'most gin'ally calls "John Bull's Run."'

"Such a lovely, quiet old street! Dear, you must see it some day — with the broad, green meadow lands on one side, and the hill crowned with trees and vines on the other.

"'Along this ridge lived Hawthorne's Septimius Felton,' said my companion.

"'And here,' said I, as we passed a tiny antique house on the hillside with curtains drawn, and no path through the grass that surrounded it, — 'here, I am positive, an old witch with a black cat must have lived a hundred years ago.'

"We jested and laughed as we went merrily on. We were young and happy that brilliant summer morning. I remember how every leaf sparkled with the heavy dewdrops, and the air seemed to fairly intoxicate one like a draught of wine. I was fairly brimming over with delight.

"We passed the old-fashioned white house with green blinds, peeping out from behind the pines, which I needed no one to tell me had been the home of the Concord seer; and a little further on appeared the brown-gabled house, nestled in a green hollow, and guarded by giant elms, where the Little Women lived their charming life. Just within these grounds stood the vine-covered Hillside Chapel, whither our steps were tending. We had passed little groups on our way, and now and then we caught a word of what they were saying; 'first entelechy,' 'pure subjectivity,' the '*ding an sich*,' and so on, which in my hilarious mood served as a further theme for jest.

"As we took our seats beneath the bust of Pestalozzi and beside the comfortable arm-chair always reserved for Mrs. Emerson, I scanned the audience closely. It was not a stylish one, and I felt a little inclined to poke fun at some of the antiquated bonnets; but my attention was attracted by the evident eagerness with which my new friend was studying the face of the speaker.

"He was a middle-aged man, with close-clipped gray beard and spectacles, and a face that seemed to be the very personification of thought. The subject of the lecture was Immortality. I listened, vainly trying to understand, and feeling as though the essence of a thousand books was being crowded into that quiet morning's talk. I had heard that this man was a German rationalist, and was undermining the foundations of Christianity; therefore I had prepared myself to see a cynic or a scoffer. I had thought that I would go, for once, to hear what he had to say; just to have an idea as to what it was all about. I felt all the excitement of doing something a little venturesome.

"Dear me," laughed Mildred; "how droll it all seems now, and what an ignorant little bigot I must have been!

"I tried to follow the speaker and to get some meaning from those quiet, clear-cut sentences as they dropped from his lips, and slowly forced upon my incredulous mind the conviction that here at least was one man who spoke whereof he knew. I had never done so hard thinking in my life. He was taking me into a field of thought of which I had never dreamed, and I was as unable to follow his giant strides as a child to follow the man in seven-league boots. My temples began to throb; in despair I gave up the attempt, and fell to watching my companion as with bated breath he followed the speaker. Only one thing I remember, and that because I jotted it down on the back of an envelope at the time. He said, 'The standpoint of absolute personality is the one to be attained. On this plane, freedom, immortality, and God are the regulative principles of science as well as of life; and they are not only matters of faith, but matters of indubitable scientific certainty.'

"The lecture was nearly two hours long, and there was to be a discussion following it; but we were both exhausted with the mental strain, and quietly slipped out into the summer sunshine.

"My companion said nothing. He walked with head erect and long strides, and I felt considerably piqued to find that he seemed utterly oblivious of my presence. Presently he turned to me, and in a tone which almost startled me exclaimed, 'Thank God for that man! More than any other man living or dead has he kept me from making utter shipwreck of my faith.' I was surprised at his earnestness and touched by the simple frankness with which he had revealed to me, almost an utter stranger, his inmost thoughts.

"Again he seemed to forget me, and we paced on in silence, past the fountain, under gigantic elms, past the 'town toothpick,' as the æsthetic scoffers have dubbed the obelisk that commemorates the soldiers of the war, and turned down the road by Hawthorne's gray old manse and through the avenue of pines, to where, stretching across the sluggish stream, we saw the

> . . . 'bridge that arched the flood'

where

> 'Once the embattled farmers stood,
> And fired the shot heard round the world.'

"Here we stopped to rest a while, under the spreading boughs of a pine-tree, beside the graves of the two British soldiers that fell in the famous fight. We shared our sandwiches and bananas, and threw crumbs to the saucy squirrels that darted from limb to limb above our heads; and then, like two children, we trimmed our hats with daisies and buttercups from the fields close by. I watched him closely, with the pleasing consciousness that my pretty dress and new hat were noticed with evident approval on his part. Evidently he was able to enjoy some other things as well as philosophy; and when he shook back the thick blonde hair which rose from his broad forehead in a sort of Rubenstein mane, and tossed over into the fields a great stone that had fallen from the wall, I began to query whether a young man with locks and sinews like a young Norse god might not be a very fascinating type of hero.

"But I was curious to know what he meant by 'shipwreck of his faith.' As we picked up our various belongings (this time I noted that he asked for my bag) and walked over through the woods to Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, I determined to probe him a little.

"'Mr. Everett,' I began, 'don't you think, after all, that philosophy is a rather dangerous thing for one to begin to study?'"

I smiled mischievously as Mildred inadvertently disclosed the name which hitherto she had adroitly concealed. She flushed a little, as if annoyed.

"After all," she said, "you might as well know his name, for he has gone, heaven knows where, and I shall never see him again."

A shade of sadness fell upon her face turned toward the firelight, but she went quietly on:

"He hesitated a moment before he answered, as if mentally to adjust himself to my plane of ignorance. Then he asked, 'And why dangerous, Miss Brewster?'

"'You know what I mean,' said I, rather vexed at being obliged to put my vague thoughts into words. 'What good can all this theorizing and speculation do? Don't you think it would be a great deal better for all these people here to spend their time in talking about something practical? My feeling is, that people who begin to think and question about God and immortality and such things, and are n't satisfied with the simple truths of the Bible, get to be skeptics before they know it, and are ruined for life. My mother's religion is good enough for me. If I can live up to that I shall be satisfied, without racking my brains and reasoning over things that God intended us to take on faith.'

"To tell the truth, this did n't exactly represent my thought; but I had often heard it said, and thought it sounded well. Besides, I was curious to see what he would reply to it.

"'It would take hours to answer adequately what you have just said, Miss Brewster,' replied Mr. Everett; 'but I will try to say something; for it is precisely these same questions that I myself have been trying to answer in the last few years.'

"We were climbing the little hill that like a crescent surrounded the green hollow, where lie the sleepers in their last sleep. On the summit, beneath the tall sighing pines, beside Emerson's grave and within a stone's throw of the graves of Hawthorne and Thoreau, we sat down and looked over the broad valley on the other side with the hills beyond. It was so quiet, so peaceful, just where a tired soul would love to have his last resting-place.

"Mr. Everett was silent for a moment, as if to collect his thought; then, not looking at me, but afar off at the glimpses of blue between the swaying boughs, he began to speak, while I listened intently, every word fairly burning itself upon my memory. I did not rest that night until I had transmitted it all to my diary, to be read and re-read over and over again.

"'You say that your mother's religion is good enough for you,' he began. 'Well, Miss Brewster, when I think of the love and devotion, of the tender prayers and wise counsels that guided my boyish waywardness, when I think of the saintliness and unselfishness of my own sainted mother, I feel like saying that, too. If I could ever have one half her spirituality and Christlikeness, I should count my life a grand success. But I cannot say, and I know that truth and justice cannot compel me to say, that my mother's theology would be enough for me, for her life was not the outcome of much in her theology. Her unquestioning faith in a literal Adam and Eve had nothing to do with her sweetness and devotion to duty. Nor was her unwavering belief in the sacredness of everything in the sixty-six Hebrew and Christian books the cause of her infinite patience and self-sacrifice. No; I want my mother's religion, but I cannot accept all of her theology. I should count it a sin against God if I were to so stultify my intelligence as to do it.

"'You say, "Don't you think all these people here had better be doing something practical?" What is more practical, I ask you, than for a human soul, to whom life is something more than meat and drink, to learn of that which more than all else concerns that soul's welfare? And what can more help to this than the study of the wisest thought of all the ages on just these very problems of life and death, things present and things to come? As Novalis says, "Philosophy can bake no bread; but she can procure for us God, Freedom, and Immortality." I count that the most practical as well as the most precious help that can be offered to any questioning human soul who has come to see that man cannot live by bread alone, and whose sorest need is to know the meaning and the end of this life of ours.'

"'But the Bible tells us that,' I cried impatiently; 'what more do we need?'

"'Perhaps you need nothing more,' he answered quietly. 'If so, well and good. Clear insight is not essential to living a noble life. If you have really grasped the spiritual meaning of Christianity it matters little that you should hold it in a more naive and literal way than I am able to. If in this age you can accept unquestioningly everything that has been taught you, if you never have a doubt, I would be the last person to raise one, for I know what mental misery would ensue in one educated as you have been. But so long as your religious faiths have been inherited, like your hair and eyes, and you have not examined them so as to make them your own, pardon my saying that there is small virtue in your holding them, and so far as your own thought goes you might as well have been a Papist or a Mohammedan.'

"'But what is the use of mental misery? Why should I encourage doubts and unrest? Is it not far better to trust in God and not venture to question all the strange things that he allows?'

"'You ask two or three questions at once; let me take them one at a time. Five years ago I asked just those same questions, and I know how you feel.' He spoke tenderly, and his voice comforted me. I was beginning to get nervous and troubled and felt myself in deep waters.

"'No great thing is ever born into this world except by suffering. If we are put here simply for pleasure, for calm content, for peace of mind, let us banish all questioning and dread it as a precursor of the nightmare. Yes, if immediate peace of mind is the primary consideration, let us, like the ostrich, bury our heads in the sand, like the chicken refuse to pick our way through the shell, and be turned out of our warm corner into the bare, cold world outside. If peace of mind is our chief aim, let us stop thinking once for all. It is dangerous. Yes, thinking is always dangerous; dangerous to one's love of ease and content with existing ideas. The little shoot content with its environment in the dark mould will never reach the sunlight until first it struggles upward from the conditions that surround it.

"'Many a time in the last four years I have said to myself, in the night of horror that swept over me, when I felt as if the foundations beneath me had broken away, "whether the Bible be true, or life eternal, or God a father, I do not know; but this one thing I do know: I must be true; I must be unselfish; I must go on and seek the light;" and, thank God, I have begun to find it at last.'

"Mr. Everett spoke with a quiet intensity of feeling that awed me. However, I ventured to ask, rather timidly, 'But you did find — you do believe in the Bible now, don't you?'

"'That is a question which cannot be rightly answered by a "yes" or "no,"' he replied; 'for neither answer would be true. I was brought up, as perhaps you were, to look upon all these matters without the slightest discrimination; to think a disbelief in Jonah's whale synonymous with the disbelief in the divine inspiration of any part of the Bible; to think a disbeliever in the Bible necessarily a disbeliever in God; and to count a disbeliever in immortality on a par with a bigamist or a horse-thief.

"'When I dared trust myself to think and read this book, or rather collection of books, with a calm, unprejudiced eye, I was amazed to find how much I had been taught to claim for them which they never claim for themselves. They became utterly new books to me, as if I had never read them before; wonderfully rich and helpful and inspiring and full, as I believe, of the truest religious inspiration, but not always a guide for me in history and science, and not infallible as to fact.

"'Who shall find any authority for the doctrine that inspiration ceased with the last one of those sixty-six books? No, Miss Brewster,' said Mr. Everett, looking at me earnestly, his shoulders thrown back, his head erect, 'God reveals himself to man to-day just as truly in this new world as ever he did thousands of years ago to Hebrew seers.

"'You ask why I should crave any deeper reasons for my belief in God, free-will, and immortality than these writings give. Simply this: I must. At first I fought against it, fearing it to be a temptation of the devil. But I came to see that this fear, for me at least, was cowardice and folly. The command was laid upon my soul to give an adequate reason for the faith that I held, and I could not be recreant to this call of conscience. I had been told to believe the Bible because it was God's Word, and then, following in a circle, to believe that there was a God because God's Word proved it. It did not take me long to see the childishness of this, and though I put it off again and again, my conscience would not be stilled until I had systematically set myself to see whether or not anything could really be known, or whether inference, conjecture, and hope were all that God had vouchsafed to the creature made in his image.

"'I suppose few women ever feel this necessity. I do not say that it is necessary for you or for any one to probe to the bottom of these things, if you are content without doing so. I think, however, that it is of the utmost importance for the thousand bewildered spirits in our day, who long to know but who cannot themselves study, to come to see that knowledge on the questions which are most vital to us all is to be had by every rational being who has time and patience and follows the right path of inquiry; and that in these matters, if we are willing to pay the cost of time and labor, we may in truth see and know.

"'There are few who have the time or taste for any deep philosophic study. There are fewer still who have any faith in the outcome of such study, and of these few but a handful who get started on the right road and persist until they attain results. Moreover, as truly in philosophy as in religion must one be "born again"; and, unlike religious birth, it cannot be instantaneous, for it is not a matter of will. It takes years to bring about this new and deeper insight.

"'I rarely find a person whom I would advise to study philosophy, for here, if anywhere, a little learning is a dangerous thing, and one is maddened by the superficial talk of those who have not learned its a-b-c, but yet presume to argue as if they had mastered everything from Aristotle to Schelling. I have come to find that there are very few people who even dream of what philosophy is. The average man fancies that speculative philosophy must be simply guess-work or some vague theorizing, unworthy of a Christian man who has any practical work to do in this world in the way of earning his living and helping to hasten the kingdom of God.

"'But the average Christian is largely materialistic in his thought. His heaven, his hell, are localities; his God a huge, anthropomorphic being, and the universe a kind of vast machine, guided by some external Power; or a sort of precipitate or sediment, as it were, of the eternal thought.

"'If this is true of a man who professes and in some measure accepts a real spiritual faith, how much more true is it of the average worldly man of common sense! He looks upon the ground he walks on as something real. It is something that appeals to his senses, and he smiles with calm contempt if you tell him that an idea is far more real than the earth beneath his foot; that it is thought, and thought alone, that sustains this planet; and that all the things that he considers real are in fact mere passing phenomena, absolutely nothing in themselves, except as they exist in relation to other things.'

"I looked up somewhat perplexed at this and was about to ask a question, but Mr. Everett was too preoccupied with his own thought to notice this. Leaning his head against a gray tree-trunk, he looked with absent eyes far off at the purple hills. Presently he went on:

"'Just as the sensualist can never understand the spiritually-minded man and his infinitely higher capacity for joy, so the man of mere *common* sense can never understand the man of philosophic insight, the man of more than common sense, until he has been mentally born again, and has transcended the materialistic phase of thought in which we all begin to do our thinking, and which most of us never pass beyond. As said the man whose dust lies at our feet, "Every man's words, who speaks from that life, must sound vain to those who do not dwell in the same thought on their own part."'

"'But is it necessary to go through this tragic experience of which you have spoken in order to reach right results?' I asked.

"'Whether it be tragic or not depends upon the temperament and traditions of the individual,' he answered.

"'To me, brought up to know all that was possible of the loveliness of Christian character, and taught to attribute it to a theology that was more or less false, a change of belief was naturally almost as much to be dreaded as a deterioration in moral character. From the cradle I was destined for the missionary work; so you see that I had always the fear of frustrating my parents' most cherished hopes if I should deviate from their standard of doctrine. In later years I gladly acquiesced in their desire to see me in the ministry; it seemed to me, it still seems to me, the most enviable life in the world.'

"I listened eagerly," said Mildred, "as Mr. Everett said this. I, too, had often thought of the missionary work, but I could not leave mother then.

"'Well, Miss Brewster,' Mr. Everett continued; 'I was blessed or afflicted, whichever you may please to call it, with a conscience which would not let me rest content with tacit consent to what I came to see was hardly more than a half truth, and my inward life since my senior year at Yale three years ago has been, until recently, one of bitter conflict. Night after night, after leaving the lecture-room at the seminary, have I walked my floor until morning, too wretched to pray, my brain half crazed with the ceaseless turmoil of my thoughts. "I have no message to give to others," I said, "for I am sure of nothing; no one is sure of anything." Like the sad Hindu king, I asked myself,

"How knowest thou aught of God,
Of his favor or his wrath?
Can the little fish tell what the eagle thinks,
Or map out the eagle's path?

Can the finite the infinite seek?
Did the blind discover the stars?
Is the thought that I think a thought,
Or a throb of the brain in its bars?"

"'But at last help came, I have told you through whom, and now as I look back upon it, I thank God for all that bitter experience. I know better how to understand and sympathize with many a one whom I have found struggling in the meshes of sophistry; earnest souls, who long for the truth more than they long for life itself, and finding no one who can do more for them than to simply say "Repent and believe."

"'Not that I have learned much yet. I have only begun to get glimpses of the truth. I feel sure of far less now than I did five years ago. But I know this: I do know and see beyond peradventure that it is right to probe to the uttermost the problems which confront me. I should have been false to myself, unfaithful to my highest, truest instinct, if I had listened to the tearful advice of my timid friends and turned my back and shut my eyes to what God would reveal to me. I did not know where I should be led; my knees knocked together with fear as I felt my way through the gloom. But gradually, and chiefly from the writings of that man whose teachings we heard this morning, have I learned not only to believe, but to know the truths which he taught us to-day. Some men call him skeptic, rationalist; at best they say, such talk must be unpractical. Fools! not to know that to save a soul from hopeless despair, to give life and health to an immortal spirit, is quite as practical a thing as to pave streets and cut coats.

"'I look upon a true philosophy as the most completely useful thing in the world.' He stopped, and I looked up bewildered.

"'Useful?' I asked.

"'Certainly; useful. Is not that useful which gives man a clear insight into what must otherwise be forever obscure? Is it not useful to lift him out of the domain of prejudice and mere opinion on vital matters, and give him the key to the universe by making him to know the grounds of his knowledge, of his being, and of his destiny?'

"'But do you not believe in relying on faith at all? Do you accept nothing that you do not understand?' I asked.

"'I understand very few things that my reason compels me to accept,' answered Mr. Everett. 'I do not understand the chemical change which transmutes my food into living animal matter, and I do not understand a million things which I believe. Certainly we must have faith. All business and all life depends upon faith. But by faith I do not mean the simple credulity of my childhood in everything that I was taught. By faith I mean a steadfast reliance on what my reason tells me is true, even though I have no immediate evidence of it, and imagination and understanding fail to compass it. When I see the apparently useless suffering and cruelty which the Supreme Power has permitted, I have faith in his infinite goodness, not because any man or book has told me that it is so, but because, thank God, I see that it is so; and it is philosophic study alone which has made me see this. He who is afraid to study and question into the nature of the universe "and trust the Rock of Ages to his chemic test" is the man who has no true faith.'

"'But after all,' I said, 'you must admit that the philosophers are but little read. It is the practical, common-sense people of the world who have done the work, and they have got on very well, too, without all this theorizing.'

"'There was never a greater mistake in the world,' replied Mr. Everett vehemently, too deeply in earnest to remember anything but the point that he was trying to make. 'The philosophers certainly have not been widely read, but that by no means measures their influence. It is they who have taught the teachers who have taught the masses, and as the traveler knows perhaps nothing of the inventor of the engine which carries him safely from one side of the continent to the other, and makes life larger for him in a hundred ways, so we all, reaping every day in every one of our human institutions the rich benefits which the thinkers of the ages have bestowed upon us, say ungratefully that we owe them nothing. We attribute all our speed to the visible engineer and conductor who by another man's genius have brought us to our destinations.'

"'Would you advise me to study philosophy?' I inquired humbly, much impressed with the point of his reply to what I had flattered myself was a rather bright remark.

"'That depends,' he said, 'on what and how you study. If you wish to study simply to be able to say or to feel that you have studied philosophy, and can quote from this or that man, I advise you not to study.'

"I must have flushed and looked a little hurt, for he quickly added, 'Pardon me, Miss Brewster, I think that you are far too much in earnest for that; but I have seen too many begin to read philosophy as a mere amusement, a sort of fad, and with no real earnest purpose, learning just enough to make them conceited or discouraged, and doing no good to themselves or any one else, and bringing the study of philosophy into disrepute. To me my philosophy has been a search for God, for truth. I have studied for my soul's sorest need, and in all my intellectual life I have found nothing so satisfying, nothing that gives me such hope and courage.'

"'Should you advise me to begin with Herbert Spencer?' I asked, thinking that I would come to something definite.

"'No, as you value your power to grow. You are not ready for him yet. He would fascinate you, and you could not refute his fallacies; but read Plato, read Kant, Fichte, Hegel. Don't begin with them, though. Read first, perhaps, the "Introduction to Philosophy" by the man whom we heard this morning. I will give you also an article of his which deals with Spencer in a way that opened my eyes.

"'Don't read much at a time, else it will utterly daunt you. Come back to it again and again at intervals. You will be astonished to see your growth. You will be surprised to find how digging at these tough problems makes such mental muscle as renders other tasks easy.

"'It will open a new world to you; but you must have infinite patience. I have made up my mind to that. I shall be more than thankful if in twenty years I have mastered this book;' and he drew a volume of Hegel from his pocket.

"The sun was sinking behind the trees as we rose to go homeward. Stiffened with sitting so long, I tripped and fell. He sprang and caught me in his great strong arms for one little moment; then — well — I trembled a bit with the start it had given me, and finding that my foot had really been hurt a little, I accepted his help as we descended the slope and climbed upon the other side to the road again. It seemed very pleasant to have his strong arm for a support. There had not been a word of love, but his unaffected, frank talk had touched me as no compliments or sentiment could ever have done.

"I had thought his voice rather harsh at first when he spoke so earnestly and vehemently, but it had grown very tender and quiet now, and as we came back from the woods to civilization again we lapsed into silence."

As Mildred ceased the clock struck midnight. The noise outside had died away, and the fire had burned low, too low for me to distinguish her face clearly.

"And was there no love-making at all?" I asked, much disappointed at the prosaic ending of the little romance that I had been anticipating. A talk on philosophy in a graveyard was not the kind of love-making that I knew about, and I wondered if there ever were another girl like Mildred.

"Oh, I did n't say there was any love-making," said Mildred rather dryly. "I simply said that I think I really was in love."

"And is that all? Did you never see him again?" I persisted.

"Yes, several times afterward," she answered; "for I went regularly to the school after that. At first I understood almost nothing, and much of what he said was Greek to me. I met some delightful people there, but he helped me more than any one else. He loaned me books, and we had many a talk.

"I felt that we were becoming fast friends, when suddenly he went West. I received a note from him some months afterward, telling me that his parents had died; but there was very little about himself. I heard afterward that he was engaged; but after Julia died I lost all knowledge of him. Probably he has forgotten me long ago, but I owe to that talk the best things that have come to me since I was a woman. Yes, Ruby, that first April-day and that second day in midsummer in old Concord are the two red-letter days of my life."

CHAPTER XI.

(Extract from the New York "Tribune.")

BOOKS FOR THE MILLION! HELP FOR THOSE WHO WILL HELP THEMSELVES.

It has been understood that Miss Mildred Brewster, the Boston heiress and philanthropist who has recently been making such a sensation in New York society, was quite inaccessible to reporters. But yesterday a member of the "Tribune" staff was so fortunate as to gain a gracious reception, and to learn certain facts which will be of great interest to the public in general.

Miss Brewster was found in her pretty parlor at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, dressed to attend a reception, in an exquisite robe of golden-brown velvet, simply made, and worn with a unique girdle and collar of

RARELY BEAUTIFUL CAMEOS.

Miss Brewster said that she was waiting for her carriage, but was not in haste, and would be pleased to make an authentic statement in regard to certain facts of which there had been vague rumors in the papers of late.

She began by saying that she supposed the newspapers would learn it indirectly sooner or later, and therefore she might as well give the facts so that they should be stated accurately. What followed will be given as nearly as possible in Miss Brewster's own words.

"When I was a child," she said, "I spent several years in some of the frontier towns of our Western states, where my father was vainly seeking for a climate which would prolong his life. I had an opportunity there to observe many things which I have never forgotten. I understood them but dimly then, but as I grew to womanhood in my New England home, surrounded with the privileges and traditions of an older and more distinctly American civilization, I often contrasted my life with what it would have been had I grown up among the German farmers, rough cowboys, greedy land speculators, and half-starved home missionaries, who formed the chief part of the people whom we met in the little towns along the railroad on the Western prairies.

"I was too young to appreciate the value of the indomitable energy of this pioneer work. I saw only the sordid, unpicturesque side of it then.

"I hated the tornadoes and blizzards; I loathed the sloughs and muddy streams — the everlasting dullness of the prairie and the prosaic struggle for existence in the little clusters of board shanties or in the isolated log cabins and dug-outs. I longed for the hills and granite bowlders, for the great elms and sparkling streams of New England, and for the refinements and conveniences of my Eastern home.

"How well I recall the tired, overworked women, toiling over their cooking-stoves, with no household conveniences, milking, churning, mending, washing, feeding the pigs, selling eggs, and making themselves prematurely old that their children might have a 'better chance.'

"I remember, with my insatiable love of reading, how my first glance on entering a house was in search of book-shelves. Many a time, though in the house of a man owning hundreds of cattle and a thousand acres of land, I have found no literature beyond a copy of the Bible but little used, the State Agricultural or Mining Reports, or a stray copy of 'Godey's Lady's Book.'

"But, as an offset to this prosaic life, I remember also, as I look back upon it now, the hopefulness and cheerfulness, the ambition and self-sacrifice, and the sturdy courage and self-reliance which all this new Western life engendered.

"There was much that was admirable about it all, and that gave promise of the development of great men and women and a glorious future for that part of our country. Yet I know that in many instances, except where a colony of Eastern people had settled and put up their schoolhouse and church before there was an opportunity to build a gambling den and saloon, the early influences which shaped the future of the towns were like the sowing of dragon's teeth, which have brought forth, as I have taken pains to learn, most deadly fruit.

"It is more than sixteen years since I have been in the West, and I intend now to revisit it. Of course I shall see an astonishing change. I read of opera houses and electric lights in the places that I remember as mere shabby settlements of a hundred shanties. But the same condition of things that I knew then is still to be found in a thousand places further west, or off the line of the main roads, and it will continue for a half century to come. Hundreds of thousands of ignorant emigrants are pouring into this land, with throngs of alert young business men from the East, all making a breakneck race for wealth. They are buying the

LAST REMNANTS OF GOVERNMENT LAND,

and are developing the material resources of the country at an amazing rate. The shanties will give place to brick blocks, and the sloughs to paved streets, soon enough. I am not concerned as to that.

"The luxuries of civilization will come as rapidly as one could wish, but it is the tendency of things in regard to the development of morals and character that alarms me. When I learn that one third of our school population in this land of boasted educational privileges is ignorant of the alphabet, and that in the Rocky Mountain states and territories there is one saloon for every forty-three voters; when I read how the peasants of Europe are flocking by the hundred thousand to this fair Western land, and I see the possibilities of the future for good or evil, it wakens all my ardor and enthusiasm to be up and doing and lending a hand to help shape its destiny.

"There are many who, not falling under good influences at once, lapse into a selfish indifference to everything but their own worldly advancement if they do not retrograde morally. I do not mean that they are heartless. They have, of course, the proverbial Western generosity and frank cordiality, which is one of the finest things in the world and is very genuine; but it is often coupled with an absolute contempt for everything beyond that which will advance their purely material interests. In short, they are 'Philistines.'

"I have seen many Western men who have made their 'pile,' as they say, who would find it absolutely impossible to believe in any one's having such a real, disinterested enthusiasm for art, or science, or literature as would permit a man like Agassiz to say:

'I HAVE NO TIME TO MAKE MONEY.'

"Do not misunderstand me. I would throw no slurs on Western men. There are thousands in New England as all-absorbed in money-getting as they, only there is this saving difference: Here, these men are, in spite of themselves, under the influence of traditions and institutions founded by better men than they; and there, they are the creators of the traditions and institutions which are to be and which will of a surety be no better than they choose to make them.

"It is the early settlers that shape the future of the country. Massachusetts, New Jersey, South Carolina are to-day what their first settlers made them.

"I believe in the New England principles, and in the men who sought New England's shores, not to find gold, to speculate in land, to buy bonanza farms, but to found a commonwealth such as mankind had never seen, a commonwealth whose corner-stones should be righteousness and ideas.

"It is these New England principles that I would engraft upon that great empire of the West, which to-day is so plastic in our hands, whose future we, to-day, have power to shape, but which to-morrow we shall be powerless to mould.

"I would teach them that all their limitless material resources cannot make them the real power in the land that little, sterile Massachusetts, with her east winds and rocky soils, has been, unless they first plant the seed that shall bring forth such men of character and thought as New England has borne.

"Why was it that so many of the men of this century, whom the nation most delights to honor, Emerson, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Lowell, Bryant, Whittier, Holmes, Beecher, Curtis, Garrison, Phillips, Webster, were sons of this New England soil?

"I know that I am saying nothing new. All this is very trite, as trite as the Ten Commandments.

It has been said a thousand times; yet half our people do not know it or believe it, and serenely smile at what they call our 'Eastern egotism.' I confess that we have quite too much of that. I, for one, have almost as hearty a contempt as any of them for the men who

> . . . 'sit the idle slaves of a legendary virtue
> Carved upon their fathers' graves.'

"Let no one think that I am boasting of the New England of to-day. I am simply saying that the principles which have made her a power in this nation are the principles by which, in East and West, in North and South, this nation must rise, or without which she must fall. And if the nation is to be saved,

THE WEST

must be saved. No man needs to be told that *there* is to be the true seat of empire.

"To me, this present war, waged between the forces of good and evil, for the conquest of this land, has an all-absorbing interest. Surely, as I have said, this generation will not pass away before the fate — that is to say, the influences which are chiefly to control the destinies of millions yet unborn — of this great nation will be settled."

As Miss Brewster uttered these words her cheeks glowed, and her whole frame seemed to quiver with the intensity of her feeling. She rose and restlessly paced the floor as she continued:

"I have said all this because I want it understood why I intend to devote a large share of my property to sowing all over the West and South the seeds of what I count as best, in the form of

FREE READING-ROOMS AND CIRCULATING LIBRARIES.

"I have been for some time carefully studying into this subject, and I have learned some facts which are rather startling when one considers the inference which must be drawn from them.

"Let me give you a few of these facts," said Miss Brewster, seating herself at her desk and drawing some papers from a pigeon-hole.

"Taking all the libraries which contain more than one thousand volumes, and are absolutely free to every one, I find that in Massachusetts there are two hundred, and in other New England states — and some of the Middle states as well — a number approximating that. But what do I find in the West and South? I find that Virginia, Kentucky, Alabama, Arkansas, Montana, Arizona, Idaho, Oregon, Nevada, Washington and Dakota territories, and New Mexico, have

NOT ONE FREE GENERAL LIBRARY.

I find that Texas, Utah, West Virginia, Mississippi, and Colorado have but one each; and that Louisiana and Maryland have none outside of the one largest city in each.

"Of course what I have said does not imply that there are no libraries in the states referred to. But it does mean that there are but few, and that those few are either subscription libraries or else belong to schools or institutions, and are not open to the general public.

"How is this all to be explained? Is it sufficient to say that the West is young and that the South is poor and sparsely settled? The West is young, indeed, but not too young to have magnificent opera houses, hundreds of millionaires' palaces, and, in many of the new cities, richer clothes for every one and more of them than the average New Englander thinks he can afford.

"The South is poor, very poor, and very sparsely settled compared with the North. But the fact that in those Southern states which I have mentioned there is not one free library open to all, such as one may find in scores of little villages in the North, is not due entirely to poverty.

"Even New York State, with her superior wealth and population, and with an aggregate number of all kinds of libraries nearly as great as that of Massachusetts, has

NO MORE THAN THIRTY

which are absolutely free and general as compared with the two hundred such in Massachusetts. And Pennsylvania, with all her wealth and numbers, shows no more than ten such libraries.

"The farther one travels from New England, the more surely does one find public sentiment indifferent to these matters, and whole communities preferring to tax themselves for the adornment of their cities, rather than to provide every poor man with books. Books are considered a luxury, not a necessity; to be indulged in only by those who can afford to pay for them.

LEARNING FOR ALL

was the idea of the men who made the North what it is. Learning for the few was the idea of the men who made the South what it is. And the men of this generation are reaping the harvest of the seed which those men sowed.

"Now I propose, as soon as practicable, to assist in putting into several thousand little communities in the West and South either a free reading-room or a free circulating library, or both, thinking that it will be the best possible use to which money can be put.

"Perhaps it may be wondered at that I do not spend these millions in the direction of Home Missionary work. I have several reasons for not doing so, although I am heartily in sympathy with it. Never was there nobler, more self-denying and more fruitful labor than that of the overworked men and women in the Home Missionary field. But, in the first place, there are one hundred needed where one can be found to go. The religious denomination in which I was reared graduates but about one hundred students from all its theological seminaries every year, scarcely enough, one would think, to supply the vacancies in the pulpits of the

East, to say nothing of the West, and I presume the same is nearly true of other denominations which I should be quite as ready to help as my own.

"The library can never take the place of the church, but I am convinced that in many communities the provision of a comfortable, tastefully furnished room, filled with periodicals, giving to every one access to the best literary, political, scientific, and religious thought of our time, will do quite as much for the morals of a town as anything that could be devised.

"Unlike a church, it will be open every day in the week. It will be a counter attraction to the street and the saloon, and if there is a circulating library as well as a reading-room, it will serve to stimulate and open a larger life to every one who takes a book from it. The home missionary shall not be lacking, but she shall appear under the guise of a librarian instead of a preacher.

"In regions where there is a large proportion of foreigners, there shall be books and periodicals in their native tongues. Few who have not looked into the matter realize the terrible mental strain to the mind of the immigrant from the disruption of old associations and the necessity, in middle life, of adapting himself to utterly new conditions, in a land where his language is unspoken. Many succumb to this, and the statistics of the numbers of

OUR FOREIGN-BORN INSANE

are startling.

"The same is true of the insanity caused among herders' and farmers' wives by their dreary, isolated lives on the treeless plains. We commonly think of people living close to nature and absorbed in simple daily tasks as being exceptionally healthy and placid. But a visit to our hospitals for the insane will tell a different story. The lonely woman, with no outlook but the prairie's level floor, to whom a new book, a new picture, a new idea never comes, is, as statistics show, as much in danger of losing her mind as the man on Wall Street whose life is a fever of excitement.

"Now, to these tired, lonely women, to the young girls who as soon as they are well into their teens begin to think of marrying and abandoning all study, to the young men so eager to make money that self-culture is counted an unnecessary luxury, to the boys who spend their evenings listening to the vulgar talk of the teamsters at the corner grocery, to the ministers and teachers who find that their scant salaries permit of none of the new books and papers which are essential to their mental life, —to all these people I should like to give the blessing of books.

"The offer of a 'St. Nicholas' or 'Youth's Companion,' from a pleasant librarian, will be quite as effectual to keep a boy off the street of an evening as an invitation from a home missionary to go to a prayer-meeting. And to the man who may never enter the building, the sight, as he passes to his work every day, of a beautiful little temple devoted to the things of thought, will serve all unconsciously to make life seem a little cleaner and sweeter and more dignified than it would be without it.

"Now as to the details of this. In the first place, I propose to help only those who are willing to help themselves. That is my principle of work in most matters.

"This is not a new scheme of mine. I have thought of it for years, but it was until recently only a dream of which there was no prospect of realization. Now, however, I have taken steps, which, whether I live or die, will scatter all over the states and territories west of the Mississippi and south of the Ohio little centres of learning, which will reach far more people, and, I must again repeat, do far more good than any other way possible.

"I have appointed two gentlemen, and they are to select three other trustees, two of whom are to be ladies, who will act with them conjointly in the management of the fund. I shall leave them largely to choose their own methods of work, but I have made some stipulations in regard to the disposal of the amount.

"No sum whatever is to be given unconditionally. Except for special reasons, no amount shall ever be given for the establishment of a library or reading-room which shall be less than fifty or more than ten thousand dollars, and the amount given must in every case be

DUPLICATED BY THE RECIPIENTS.

"That is to say, if a little rural community of five hundred people out in Nebraska is able to raise one hundred dollars as a nucleus for a reading-room, I will give an equal amount. Some room over a store, perhaps, or in the church vestry, will be rented. It will be fitted up with chairs, tables, and lamps, which may be contributed by individuals independently of the fund. Then the remainder may be spent in periodicals and a few reference books, to be selected by a committee appointed by the town and by the agent whom I shall employ to look after all details of the work.

"I have already engaged a dozen persons, New England teachers chiefly, women whom I know, whose good sense and executive ability are to be trusted, and I have apportioned out the localities in which they are to work. The first duty of each one will be to put herself in communication with the state superintendent of education, and to receive his indorsement. Then she will make the announcement in all the leading papers of the state or territory, that she is the trustees' accredited representative, and is authorized to make such arrangements as may be deemed fitting for the establishment of free reading-rooms and libraries in every township. Getting a list of such towns as have no provision of this kind for books and reading, she will proceed to communicate, either by letter or by personal interviews, with the clergymen, mayors, and leading men of the town, and, where any apathy in the matter exists, will endeavor to arouse interest and stimulate them to raise a fund.

" Wherever there is an interest and a desire to take immediate advantage of my proposal by erecting a building, the agent will join with the town in deciding on the plan of construction, and in the selection of a lot, insisting always that it shall be ample enough to allow of the addition of more rooms to the building as the town grows.

" All the details of the arrangements will be submitted to the head committee in New York, thereby insuring the consideration of many matters essential to the success of the scheme, which might be overlooked by the average selectman, more skilled in raising grain and killing hogs than in the science of library construction.

" Of course all this will require tact as well as business-like habits on the part of the agent, but I can rely on those I have engaged for these qualities, and I will risk their success anywhere. I shall urge them to encourage, wherever they can, the erection of a small hall in connection with the library building, which may serve for lectures and meetings, and by pleasant, dignified surroundings give a tone to the character of the proceedings held in it, which might not be obtained elsewhere.

"I shall insist on making the buildings as fireproof and as beautiful as the money will allow. I want to make the Library the most attractive place in town.

"In farming communities, where houses are few and far between, and an hour an evening at a central reading-room would be an impossibility, I shall suggest a circulation of periodicals after the fashion of our Eastern book clubs.

"One great demand which will be made on us, and which we are not yet ready to supply, is for good librarians. I wish to call the attention of intelligent young women to this field of work which is about to be opened to them, provided that they are fitted for it.

"In these new libraries, I propose to provide the librarian at my own expense for the first two years, thereby insuring the judicious management and consequent popularity of the scheme.

"A librarian who has the missionary spirit can have, in a small town, about as christianizing an influence as a home missionary. She will make the library a pleasant place, where quietness and good manners are the rule, and every one is made to feel at home; she will offer wise suggestions as to the selection of books, and give occasional talks on authors and good literature.

"I mean to send out strong, earnest, college-bred young women, who will take a missionary view of their work, and make it a means of great good. I shall pay them well, and, as their terms expire, shall transfer them from one place to another to do pioneer work, varying their salary according to the amount of work done.

"My reason for choosing women for the work is, that I think them to be more faithful and conscientious than men, as a rule, and to have more tact and knowledge of detail. Besides, there are more capable women than men who would be benefited by the money and experience.

"I am especially interested in the success of my scheme in the South, where a circulating library, open to every one without distinction of race or sex, is an almost if not quite an unheard-of thing.

"The scarcity of reading matter among both colored and white teachers, to say nothing of other people, is something fairly startling, and my agents in the Southern states will probably be compelled to adopt somewhat different measures from those used in the West.

"A circulation of magazines and papers will be necessary in sparsely settled districts, where people would otherwise have to walk two or three miles to get any benefit from a reading-room.

"Suppose, for instance, there is a little community of fifty families, both black and white, whose cabins and clearings are scattered over an area five miles square. There are hundreds of such places in the South where the people are completely out of the world, and where not one adult in five sees a weekly paper regularly or could read it if he saw it. To these people, up on the mountain sides, in the pine forests or on the river-bottoms, my

BRAVE NEW ENGLAND TEACHER

will go. She will call them together and have a meeting. She will get them to pledge, say fifty dollars a year, and to this she will add another fifty. Half of this, perhaps, will go for periodicals, chiefly illustrated weeklies and magazines, and the remainder will be paid to some of the more enterprising who can read, and who will agree to hold neighborhood meetings weekly. The blacks will be with the blacks, and the whites with the whites, probably, and the reading matter will be read aloud for the benefit of all.

"Some responsible committee will take charge of the reception, distribution, and preservation of the papers and magazines, and at the end of the year they will, perhaps, be sold at auction among the contributors to the fund.

"If the reading matter were given outright there would be some chance against the success of the plan. People care little for what costs them nothing. But having had to sacrifice something to bring it about they will think it worth something."

"What would you do, Miss Brewster," the writer inquired, "in towns where reading-rooms were open to both whites and negroes? Have you any idea that the whites would tolerate being brought into contact with blacks on a par in a public reading-room?"

"Probably not," replied Miss Brewster; "for racial animosity is still pretty strong in most sections, I imagine. But the difficulty could be by allowing certain days or certain hours for one race and other days or hours for the other race, so that all could be benefited without setting prejudices too much at defiance."

At this juncture, Miss Brewster's carriage being announced, the extremely interesting interview was terminated.

BUGGSVILLE, MO.

DEAR FRIEND: The trustees told me that they thought you would be glad to receive a letter from me, telling you something about my experiences in addition to the official report, a copy of which they will forward.

Buggsville, as you already know, is the first town to put up a library building with aid from the Western and Southern Library Fund. Therefore I naturally feel considerable pride and interest in this, the first-fruits of my labors, so far as the erection of a building is concerned.

I will say, by the way, however, that I have been very successful in starting reading-rooms in the little villages, sixty-eight little towns already having them well equipped and beginning to produce a marked result.

Three months ago we started a reading-room at Onetumka, ten miles from here. The people were a rough, ignorant set, for the most part. A good many foreigners are there, and a number of land speculators and some mill hands, for they have a good water-power, and are already beginning to do a little manufacturing.

It was really one of the most hopeless places I have ever seen. The bad element had got the upper hand from the first. There were five saloons, and several low dance-halls and pool-rooms. There was no resident minister, and they had preaching only once in two weeks by an overworked Baptist preacher with much goodwill and little tact in managing so difficult a community.

I always make it a point to get the ministers to help me first of all, but here it was useless. So I appealed to the school-teacher, the doctor, and the mill-owner. The latter took little interest, although I assured him that anything that could entice his workmen from the saloon would make them serve him better.

The little school-mistress talked to her children about it, but with no success; the doctor was indifferent, and, as I had a more promising field elsewhere, I stayed in the town only a few days.

But presently the county papers began to be full of the library business, and I was asked to speak here and there in the little schoolhouses and churches. At first I trembled at facing an audience of one or two hundred, but I had not been a school-ma'am for nothing, and I soon got over that, at last finding myself no more afraid of them than of my fifty boys and girls in the old school-room at home.

I found that this was the best way to arouse interest. I gave them a practical talk, told them about book clubs, Chatauqua circles and other things, and suggested ways and means of raising money. Most of them live pretty comfortably, but money is scarce, and I find that most of the farms are mortgaged. Generally, however, I found some degree of enthusiasm, especially among the women, when they learned that after the first month it could be so arranged that the magazines might be taken from the reading-room and circulated.

You can't imagine how many times I have heard some tired farmer's wife say, often with tears in her eyes, "Miss Martyn, this 'll be a godsend to me. I never get time to go anywhere, or to sit down and read a book; but if I could have that 'St. Nicholas' or 'Wide Awake' for the children, or just sit down once in a while and read an article, or simply look at those beautiful pictures in 'Harper's' and 'The Century,' I feel as though I should n't get so discouraged with the work."

"Sometimes I feel as if I was forgetting all I ever knew, and the children are growing up so rough and don't know about any other kind of life," they will say, in a troubled way, and I feel sorry enough for them. In many cases these women before coming west have had good educations, and this monotonous life, in which there is so little mental stimulus, is terribly hard for them to bear.

Well, after a while, Onetumka heard what the other towns near by were doing, and one or two of the mill hands wrote me that they had been around collecting money and had secured fifty dollars, beside gaining the free use of a suitable room. So I went there and succeeded in raising the sum to seventy-five dollars, to which I added as much more. Then I managed to get the selection of the periodicals myself, and excluded the "Police Gazette" and some others that had been asked for. As there is a large number of Germans here, I subscribed for several German publications; also for a generous list of illustrated papers of a harmless sort, knowing that "Puck" and "Life" would be better appreciated than the "Fortnightly" or the "Contemporary." Then I saw that a committee was appointed to provide voluntary service in looking after the room and circulating the magazines. I arranged that the reading-room should be open and some one in attendance on Sunday afternoon and evening, as that is the time when the men have a little leisure and the saloons do a great business.

In no place has there been so marked a result as in Onetumka. A record is kept of the attendance, and it has averaged seventy-five every day.

"The reading-room is really a means of grace," the minister writes. I myself am aware of that, and shall not fail to keep them stimulated until they have a good library.

I started a reading-room at Buggsville during my first six weeks in the state. Here I found good ground for work. Most of the people were ambitious, and some of the young ladies had formed a Chatauqua circle, the only one that I have found thus far.

There were three little feeble churches, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist, each having about half a congregation, and each unable by itself to support a minister decently. They were willing to make sacrifices for the library, however. I suggested that while waiting for the new building they should make use of the vestry of the Methodist church. This is a large and well-lighted room, and at a slight expense for shelves could accommodate as many books as we could buy, and also serve excellently for a reading-room. I found, however, that this aroused a good deal of sectarian feeling and would not do. The Presbyterians and Baptists said that if their children should get accustomed to going there during the week they would want to go there on Sunday, and their own Sunday-schools would dwindle. In order to leave their vestry to be used solely as a reading-room, I suggested that the Methodist Sunday-school should meet at the Baptist church, holding its session at an hour when the two Sunday-schools should not conflict. But this, I discovered, was even worse in the minds of these would-be Christians, who were so afraid of each other, and I found that I was sowing discord instead of harmony.

At this juncture, fearing to lose all help from me if they did not bestir themselves, one man gave a lot 100 × 200 feet, on condition that a building should be put up within a year; another who owned a quarry offered stone for the building; the town voted to give one thousand dollars, and the young people, thus encouraged, set to work earnestly, and by fairs and entertainments added considerably more. I cheered them on with the inspiriting assurance that every cent they earned meant two for the library. The enthusiasm and good spirit, when they got fairly at work, were marvelous, and the people were drawn together in a way to make them forget their differences in their zeal for the common good.

I found a good deal of strong opposition to having the building open on Sunday. I had asked that the reading-room might be open on Sunday afternoons when there was no church service, knowing that this would prevent a good deal of lounging on street corners, and, moreover, subdue much disorder among a set of restless street youth who are fast becoming a terror to the town; but after a great deal of discussion and hot blood over the matter, the conservatives won the day.

Yesterday the building was dedicated, and I was requested to give one of the eight addresses on the great occasion. The whole town turned out, and it was a gala day. The stores were closed, and after a grand procession, led by a German band hired from a neighboring town for the celebration, we proceeded to the library, which is really the most beautiful building in Buggsville.

Every one felt a pride and personal interest in it, from the two solid men of the town who had given the land and the stone, and were consequently the heroes of the day, down to the small boys and girls who had all given their coppers. I felt that every one in town was my friend, and as I rode in state in the procession in a mud-bespattered buggy, the boys cheered, the bells rang, and I think every one felt that a new era had begun. The farmers' boys and their "best girls" came in from all the country around, and I can't describe to you all the droll and pathetic sights I saw.

I gave them a little talk on "Books and how to use them," as short and as sensible as I could make it. At its close a white-haired old man, whom I had never seen before, came and took me by the hand, and said in a simple, childlike way: "Miss Martyn, I want to ask you to tell that rich young lady who has made this thing possible for us here to-day that the blessing of an old man rests upon her.

"I was born down in Maine, and never had much schooling. I came to this part of the country fifty-five years ago. My folks were killed by the Indians. It was mighty different here fifty-five years ago, I can tell you, Miss Martyn; there were Indians all about then, and wolves too. We had taken up government land, and after the old folks were killed I kept on the place as long as I could stand it, for the Indians had by that time been driven off, and there was no more danger. It was awful lonesome, though. There was n't a soul within twelve miles to speak to. Sometimes I thought I should go insane from lonesomeness.

"I had only two books, — my mother's little Testament, and another book: perhaps you 've heard of it: 't was 'Locke on the Human Understanding.' Well, I 'd always been fond of books. Somehow I never took to farming, and sometimes I felt as if I 'd give every acre I had for a new book, or a newspaper that would tell me what was going on in the world; something that would give me new thoughts; I was so tired of thinking the old ones over and over.

"The fellows who were my nearest neighbors were n't my kind; they had n't any books, and, if you 'll believe it, I 've ridden many a time fifty miles to get a newspaper a week old.

"Well, at last I could n't stand it any longer. I was ashamed to ask any woman to be my wife, and to come out and live in my dreary log cabin, even if I 'd known any woman to ask, but I did n't. Unmarried women were scarce in those days. At last I sold all the land for a song, — I should have been rich now if I 'd only kept it, — and I moved a little nearer folks.

"I knew my Bible, and at last, though I had n't much education, I began to go around preaching. But a home missionary without a salary has not much money or time for books; besides, before the railroad, I could n't get books any way if I 'd had money, and sometimes I — perhaps you won't believe it, ma'am, but I 've actually cried for books, I felt so sort of hungry and starved. I was thirty years old before, to my knowledge, I ever saw a book of poetry. It was Longfellow's. Well, ma'am, that book — I can't tell you" — and the old man's blue eyes filled with tears and his voice choked.

His simple, genuine feeling was so sweet and so unexpected that it fairly thrilled me. I think I never realized in my life before what mental starvation must be to a sensitive spirit. When I took him by the hand and led him around to see all the books nicely covered and numbered on the shelves, he could only smile through his tears, and touching them almost reverently, say, "Thank the Lord! I never expected to live to see so many books. Thank the Lord!"

I inquired afterwards who he was, but no one knew; they said he was a stranger who had come there simply for the day. I am sorry to have lost sight of him; he was a rare soul, I am sure.

I did the best I could with the money that you sent as a special gift for the first library. I sent to Houghton, Mifflin & Co., and bought their large lithographs of the American poets, and had them nicely framed in narrow oak frames, and hung around the reading-room, with a little biographical sketch pinned up underneath each one. The rest of the money I spent for a number of unmounted photographs from Soule's, which I taught the young people here to mount and arrange in home-made frames. No doubt, most of them would have been much better pleased with some cheap chromos, but I thought of what would please them best ten years from now, and planned for that.

They have already projected, at my suggestion, a course of reading in the history of art; and whereas a year ago it would have been impossible to get most of the young people to undertake anything really serious, they now evidently consider it quite the thing. All this greatly encourages me, especially as I see hopeful signs of the good fashion spreading.

This is a long letter, but I know your warm interest in all the details of this work, so I make no apology, and congratulate myself that you will consider it a signal success to have one building all equipped and in running order in eight months from the time when you indorsed the scheme.

Ever yours faithfully,
HANNAH MARTYN.

CHAPTER XII.

"Shall not that Western Goth of whom we spoke,
So fiercely practical, so keen of eye,
Find out some day, that nothing pays but God?"
(*Cathedral.*) LOWELL.

(Extract from the "Chicago Inter-Ocean.")

GOOD CITIZENSHIP! HOW A BOSTON BEAUTY PROPOSES TO BRING IT ABOUT! ANTIDOTE FOR ANARCHISM!

IN the arrival in our city last week of the rich Miss Brewster of Boston, society has naturally felt a warm interest. First, because she is young and charming; secondly, because she is reputed fabulously wealthy; and thirdly, because she adds to these attractions a decided mind of her own, which has fortunately turned itself in the direction of alleviating some of the woes of human-kind.

But the pertinacious reticence maintained by herself and the ladies and gentlemen who are her traveling companions, and are understood to be *en route* for Alaska, has given our reporter more than one fruitless trip to the Grand Pacific Hotel.

It is currently rumored that more than one

EUROPEAN CORONET

has been laid at the feet of the bonny belle from

Beacon Hill, but, like the sensible little Puritan maiden that she is, she prefers to keep the reins in her own hands a little longer, and her millions will not at present pass to any of the bloated aristocracy of an effete despotism of the Old World.

It was ascertained yesterday from the waiters that the great parlors of the hotel had been engaged by Miss Brewster for a large reception to some of our most eminent citizens, chiefly in the clerical walks of life. So a reporter in a ministerial rig presented himself, was admitted, and taking refuge in a camp-chair at the rear of perhaps two hundred and fifty ladies and gentlemen, had a fair opportunity to report proceedings.

He soon discovered that the reception was nothing more than a business meeting convened for the purpose of listening to some address or discussion, the guests being seated facing a slightly raised platform.

The assemblage seemed to be chiefly composed of gentlemen, and every profession and sect was represented by some of its most eminent members.

At precisely eight o'clock Miss Brewster, conducted by Rev. Dr. T——, entered at a side door. They proceeded to the platform and took seats in two velvet armchairs which were placed in readiness.

Miss Brewster was simply dressed in white, with a corsage bouquet of yellow roses and a yellow rose in her dark hair.

As Dr. T—— rose to speak, the chatter ceased, and he said:

"*Ladies and Gentlemen:*

"Each one of you present has received a note of invitation requesting your presence here this evening for the consideration of a plan which shall be of benefit to our city. This plan, as it will be unfolded to you

BY ITS ORIGINATOR,

will, I think, command your heartiest sympathy and coöperation. I consider it a peculiar privilege to present to you this evening one whose noble father was my valued friend, and who in her earliest years was well known to me; and now that she returns to what was for a few months the home of her childhood, it is with great pleasure that at her request I have summoned here to-night so many representatives of the thought and the moral force of this great city to listen to what she has to propose, and in return to give her the benefit of their united wisdom.

"I have the honor to present to you Miss Mildred Brewster of Boston."

Every eye was fixed in admiration on the slender, girlish form that had something queenly in its bearing, and there was a rustle of expectancy as Dr. T—— ceased and Miss Brewster rose to speak.

There was a slight tremor in her voice as with deepening color and drooping eyes she uttered her first words.

"Good friends," she said, "I have asked you here to-night for a specific purpose.

"In the providence of God there has been placed in my hands within the last few months the means to do much that for years I have felt ought to be done, but have been powerless to do. And fearing lest my stewardship be short, and I be called to give account and return with empty hands and no fruit garnered, I have dared not delay, no, not for a day, except to more seriously and wisely prepare for my task."

Miss Brewster gained courage as she proceeded, and in a clear, unshaken voice continued:

"In all lands on which the sun ever shone, probably there was never a time when money wisely expended could set in play so many and such powerful forces for good as it can do now and here. For here, in this western land of unlimited possibilities, is the young giant born whose savage strength may prove our nation's weakness if we leave his infant years to the guidance of his own wayward will.

"Here, then, is the sorest present need in our land to-day, for here in our hands lies the power to mould the influences which shall shape the destiny of millions yet unborn. One hundred dollars now may prevent the evil which, a century hence, one hundred thousand dollars could not undo.

"As I have driven about your magnificent boulevards and marked your towers and palaces, I have been impressed even more than I expected to be, and my expectations were great, with your wealth, and its solid, satisfactory embodiment in enduring architecture and fine parks and streets. But not only has your material advancement amazed me. I have been most profoundly impressed with the seriousness of mind and the depth of patriotic feeling that was shown in your notable celebration of the centennial of the beginning of our constitutional government.

"Historic old Boston, that of all other cities should have appreciated the significance of the occasion, gave hardly a thought to the day. New York gave herself to ostentatious pageantry and a glorification of Washington alone; but in this new city of the West, unlinked by historic ties with the past, have I found in press and people a deeper sentiment and

A MORE THOUGHTFUL READING

of the lessons of the century.

"I have been studying this wonderful city of yours that buys more of Browning's poems than any other city in the world, and is fast drawing to itself not only the wealth and fashion of the land, but that culture of which our older cities have fancied themselves the almost exclusive possessors.

"I have been looking at your schools, your churches, your philanthropies, and, above all, at your poor, and that class from which your

ANARCHISTS AND CRIMINALS

are recruited.

"I have found, as I need not say, much to admire and much to deplore. And it is to consider those tendencies which I deplore that I ask your attention this evening.

"Of all the dangers that threaten us as a nation, I find but two unrepresented in this city, namely, Mormonism, and the amalgamation of the white and other races. But against intemperance, licentiousness, political corruption, and all the evils incident to a vast foreign population, this city, with its numbers increasing by gigantic strides, presents a field for work scarcely exampled on the continent. Not that Chicago is a sinner above all other cities. In some respects, notably its comparative freedom from the close crowding in tenement houses which exists in New York, it is fortunate.

"But, so far as I can learn, not another great city on the continent contains so large a proportion of people of

FOREIGN PARENTAGE.

In driving through your beautiful avenues one can scarcely credit the statement that only nine per cent. of your people are of strictly native parentage; but in going through that section on the North side where your Poles and Bohemians live — in seeing the Irish, Swedes, Germans, and more recently the Italians, who are flocking to your city, one is made to realize this in a measure. It is to this point that I chiefly wish to call your attention.

"This city is growing prodigiously; it is destined to grow. More and more, as means of communication and transportation are increased, as you well know, are the people of this age flocking to the cities. One hundred years ago one in thirty lived in a city; now one in four is the number which the census gives us. Especially is it true that foreigners prefer city life. In far greater numbers proportionately to the native population do they congregate in the centre of wealth, influence, and political power, and often for the purpose of obtaining that political power which through the negligence and indifference of our better class of men is readily yielded to their demands.

"Now that the municipal government in our great cities is largely in the hands of the foreign-born, for which we have only ourselves to thank, we are beginning to awaken to the fact, and the indignant cry 'America for Americans' is heard. With this I cannot wholly sympathize. We have opened our doors to the world, we have invited to our highest municipal offices whoever could buy them, we have been eager to get rich, we have had no time or interest in anything beyond satisfying our imperious appetite for wealth and luxury and social position.

"We have put behind us simplicity and calmness, the plain living and high thinking which engendered all that we count best in our history, and now we cry with ever increasing wail, 'Let us eat our cake and have it.' 'Let us spend our whole life in selfish indifference to the public weal; let us turn over our most sacred trusts into the hands of ignorance and incompetence, and then let us reap what we have not sowed and garner where we have not planted.'

"No, not America for the Americans, if it be such Americans! Rather let those who have been willing slaves

FEEL THE WHIP AND THE SHACKLES

until they learn that justice and peace and righteousness within our borders are not to be, except as the fruit of their love, their labor, and their eternal vigilance. [Applause.]

"No, not America for Americans, but America for American ideas and institutions! And welcome be he, whether of our own land or any other, who, seeing what God has destined this fair land to be as leader of the nations, seeing it as its early Founders saw it, shall give heart and brain and hand to purifying and redeeming it, lest indeed it be the land of 'Broken Promise.'

"I have nothing to say against foreigners as foreigners, but I look into our criminal reports and find by a careful search that the proportion of criminals to the foreign population is just about twice that to the native. I learn that among our foreigners we find about two thirds of our brewers, distillers, and liquor-sellers, and among these varied nationalities, who have sustained the breaking up of old ties and transplanting to utterly new conditions, a far greater tendency to insanity than among the native stock. I see that the causes which tend to immigration will in all probability continue, and the influx into our great cities, especially your own favorably situated one, advance indefinitely. Therefore, it has seemed to me that of all places in this land Chicago was the best one in which to begin a concerted action for the Americanization of its foreigners and for promoting the

GOOD CITIZENSHIP

of all its citizens whether native or foreign. It seems to me we must do this in self-preservation.

"In Boston, as you know, where we have had to learn some sad lessons from our careless indifference in regard to municipal matters, we have begun to arouse ourselves and have established a Society for Promoting Good Citizenship whose object is to further in all thinking people, mothers, voters, teachers, and students, a higher ideal of citizenship and an active, unpartisan effort for its realization.

"This work is done in various ways: by free lectures given by prominent citizens, by suggestions for study in schools and colleges, and by the encouragement of a deeper interest in the community in the study of history, civil government, and political economy. The society is yet in its infancy, and has thus far produced little perceptible effect; but, in addition to the well-known Old South work in history, it shows a step in the right direction.

"Long before it was started it had been

MY DREAM

to see something of a similar tendency established in every large city in our land, and it is because I wish to suggest to you certain measures which have in view the attainment of good citizenship in your midst that I am here to-night.

"A Chicago gentleman recently said to me, 'The fact is, we get careless here. We are so busy about our own private affairs that we let our voting go by for a year or two, till finally about once in seven years things get so bad we can't stand it, and then we all get mad and roll up our sleeves and go in and have a general clearing out. After that, things work well for a year or two, and then are as bad as ever.'

"I understand that at present you have a fairly good city government, that your leading officials for the most part are not corrupt. But even if this were sure of lasting, of what a thing to boast!

"In the minds of too many I find the idea seems to prevail that so long as taxation is not raised, and there is a police force competent to quell turbulent strikers, and no infamous scandal at the City Hall, so long there is nothing else to be done in the line of good citizenship than to cast one's vote, pay one's taxes, and keep one's sidewalk clean.

"Now I hold that such a conception of the duties of citizenship is unworthy a Christian and a patriot, and it is as Christians and patriots that I am addressing you.

"I am not here to remind you of the unequaled folly and expense of bad government, and to point out to you the material benefits accruing to a city where there is a pure and economical city government and an incorruptible court.

"I am not here to speak to you on the ground of mere utility and expediency, though with a different audience such arguments might hold the first place. But I speak to you as scholars, as men and women of insight who need not to be reminded that the state, as one of the three great human institutions by which civilized man has differentiated himself from the savage, has higher functions than those which appeal most forcibly to the ordinary man and woman of to-day.

"We live in a

MATERIALISTIC ATMOSPHERE,

where the things of the senses allure far more than the things of thought, where a man of ideals is laughed at by the majority as an unpractical theorist, and shrewdness is esteemed the highest virtue.

"I have been looking over your school reports and have been noting the disproportionate number of girls who are graduated.

"Your boys and young men are impatient for business. Even those in well-to-do families leave school very early. I find that *ninety-two per cent. of your children leave school before they ever study any text-book of history*, and that seventy-five per cent. leave before they reach the grade where a little historic information is given through the aid of biographical sketches and stories.

"Think of it! Seventy-five per cent., the majority of them our future voters, who have never so much as heard of the Pilgrim Fathers or the war of the Revolution, and who have far too feeble an educational équipment to lead to much further study!

" But even of those who have some smattering of history we find thousands appearing at the polls every year, having heard a little of the cant and the bluster of partisan politics, and having nothing more to fit them for their duties as citizens in a land whose national and state and city governments they have never studied.

" Moreover, they have the wildest notions in regard to those great questions of labor, wages, and reform which are agitating our country. Such are the men who hold the ignoble conviction that every man is selfish at heart, that to the victors belong the spoils, and that desire for office is inevitably ambition for personal gain.

" You have learned in the past somewhat of the cost to this city and state of the presence of anarchists within your midst. But what are you doing to make good citizens of the thousands of men, women, and children who are said to be enrolled in anarchist Sunday-schools here in this city?

" What is being done to prevent the children of the mob that tears up your horse-car tracks when you have a strike from following ten years hence their fathers' example?

" But I am not speaking merely of rumsellers or anarchists, or of ignorant foreigners or men who sell their votes. I am speaking of the banker's sons as well as the blacksmith's.

"There is among many of the hard-headed young business men of our time whom I have met a

TERRIBLE SKEPTICISM.

They are skeptical of humanity, of virtue. There is a belief that every man has his price, that politics is a machine, to be run for the benefit of those who have it in charge. There is, even among honorable men, a tendency to joke at public scandals, to sneer at Sunday-school politics and womanish ideals.

"Now, to me, this hard and cold skepticism betokens a rottenness and a corruption in the body politic scarcely less terrible to contemplate than the open, high-handed peculation which occasionally startles the community and forms a nine days' wonder.

"For, as I need not say, a sick man is as sure to die from blood-poisoning as from an open cancer. The latter may shock us more, but the former is just as deadly. And the danger to this great city to-day is not so much from the dynamite of the anarchist as from the indifference and inactivity of the men and women who have your brains, your wealth, your culture, and many of them your nominal Christianity.

"Pardon me if I seem to be addressing you, my elders and betters, as if I were presuming to tell you anything new or anything which you could not state quite as forcibly as I may do.

"It is not that I have anything new to say that I venture to speak thus, but that I may clearly state my own position and grounds for action in the matter which I shall soon present to you.

"You have observed that I have used the more comprehensive term 'citizen' instead of 'voter,' and it is for this reason that I have used it. The duties of the citizen apply to every one who is a recipient of the benefits of the state, and this includes that half of the community whom their own indifference and the

PREJUDICES AND TRADITIONS

of the majority of voters still exclude from their rightful share in this matter of public housekeeping which we call municipal government.

"It is the duty of the male citizen to vote, and not only to vote, but to attend the caucuses which alone insure the possibility of having a worthy candidate. It is also his duty to pay his taxes and keep his sidewalk clean, but his duty does not end here. It is his imperative duty as an honorable citizen to see that this subtle poison, which, bred from germs of selfishness and ignorance, is creeping through the veins of our people, shall be arrested ere a complete social upheaval teach us the painful lesson that vigilance alone is the price of liberty.

"It seems to me that the duty of the citizen is coextensive with life and opportunity. It is not a duty which the man or woman of conscience can lay aside between election days. The good citizen must be always a refuter of error, an initiator of reform, in short, a person whose conscience gives him no rest until what ought to be has been substituted for what is.

"The good citizen must, above all, have such a lofty conception of the state and of statesmanship as shall lift it forever above the moral plane where it has been allowed to rest by the average conscience dulled to all the finer moral perceptions by the force of custom and conventionality.

"There are such citizens. I see many of them before me as I speak, but that there shall be a thousand where there is now but one, am I here tonight to speak to you.

"And now, after this lengthy prelude, permit me to ask your attention to the scheme which I suggest for helping to bring about in this city a higher standard of good citizenship. Pardon a bit of personal experience.

"Scarcely a day goes by in which I am not importuned by various worthy beggars to give thousands and even millions to endow this and that college, hospital, and asylum.

"The last project which was proposed to me was to put a million dollars into a college to be devoted to fitting poor boys for the ministry free of expense. And my importunate beggar was greatly offended when I said that I should consider this one of the best means for promoting hypocrisy and dependence, and that I thought a few scholarships wisely distributed in colleges of repute would help the ministry more than a million dollars expended chiefly on brick and mortar.

"'But what are you going to do with your money? Don't you think you ought to give it to the

LORD'S POOR?'

I was asked with that delightful assumption of authority which certain people who have the assurance of infallibly knowing the mind of the Lord always adopt.

"'Certainly,' I answered; 'but the Lord has commissioned me to spend what is intrusted to me where it will effect the best results, and I prefer to put the next money that I spend into brains rather than into bricks.'

"Now I propose to devote one hundred and fifty thousand dollars during the next ten years to stimulating thought in this city in the direction of Good Citizenship. [Applause.]

"I shall ask a committee of twenty-five ladies and gentlemen, which you shall choose from the number present, to select for me a man of ripe experience, of scholarship, and disinterested devotion to the cause of which I have spoken — a man of good presence and address, who can combine the functions of business manager and orator, to whom I shall pay five out of the fifteen thousand dollars which I propose to devote yearly for the promotion of good citizenship in your city.

"By the advice and consent of this same committee, which shall constitute itself a board of directors, he shall spend the remaining ten thousand for the best interests of the work in hand.

"I put no restrictions on this expenditure and lay down no rules of conduct beyond making the work of the organization absolutely unpartisan and unsectarian. The superintendent elected by the directors shall be free to use such methods as shall seem fit to him, being however held responsible to the directors and removable at their option.

"Although I leave everything to the judgment of the directors, I wish to make a few suggestions which they are quite free to accept or reject.

"First I suggest that for this work the city be divided into various districts, and that each church constitute itself a centre for effective work in some district, so that workers may be somewhat equally distributed, and no part of the city neglected. These districts need not be based necessarily upon the numbers of their inhabitants, but upon their needs.

"I would urge every minister either in or out of the pulpit, as he may prefer, to make clear to his congregation the purpose of this organization which is to be formed, and himself lead his people into hearty coöperation with it.

"I know that there are some well-meaning, religious people who might object to this, dreading the preaching of politics from the pulpit and the diversion of the attention of the young from strictly religious work. They prefer to have everything pertaining to secular education debarred from the church-building.

"To me such people seem

SADLY IRRELIGIOUS.

I wonder that they can read their Bibles and fail to learn from the examples of the Hebrew prophets what God would have man say concerning the government and wise ordering of a backsliding people. Those brave men of old were not afraid of preaching politics; and how can one, the follower of him who taught us to pray, 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,' dare to make this but mere lip-service? Surely they will be the first to give the influence of their Christian manhood to bring that kingdom here and now in this city of Chicago. The clergyman who fails to teach his people that God as truly leads this nation now as in the days of old is recreant to his trust, is unworthy of his calling, as it seems to me.

"I would have our church vestries, which are closed and vacant a great part of the week, thrown open at least one evening in a week for discussions, lectures, debates, or small classes grouped together for the study of subjects that will promote good citizenship.

"I suggest that all classes of people, whether church-goers or not, who are willing to join in this work, be divided into four sections.

"First and largest of all would be the section containing those who know little of American history, civil government, and political economy.

These would form themselves into bands for studying a well-selected course of reading, beginning with elementary work, and proceeding from such books as Mr. Dole's 'The Citizen and the Neighbor,' to profound works like Mulford's 'The Nation,' or perhaps Hegel's 'Philosophy of History.'

"I see no reason why with a proper system and the natural interest which I think the subject will awaken there should not eventually result as widespread and beneficent a work as that which the Chatauqua classes have done.

"There should be a secretary for each little centre of study to whom reports of work should be made, and certificates or diplomas should be bestowed by the directors on those who have successfully passed through different courses.

"I also suggest public debates and dissertations by members of both sexes. It is not so difficult a matter as you may think to interest young people in such work. I know of a teacher in Somerville, Massachusetts, who for years has been the means of carrying on a historical club of about seventy-five boys and girls under fifteen years of age. These children meet regularly, conducting their meetings themselves according to Cushing's 'Manual of Parliamentary Rules,' and girls as well as boys take part in a modest, fearless way. They get not only much historical information on the subjects they discuss, but also a very valuable discipline which renders them self-possessed in manner, and discriminating in their thought, and is the best of training for many duties of good citizenship.

"All these results take time and patience and tact in the planners of the classes, lest rivalry and jealousy and short-sightedness defeat the end in view. But when a

SCHEME IS ONCE THOUGHT OUT

in its main features it is comparatively easy to follow, especially when it is as flexible as the one I present to you, and when the leaders are disinterested men and women.

"The second of the four classes which I have suggested would contain a much smaller number of persons, and would be those who have the time and ability to teach. This would bring forth much latent talent for home missionary work which does not find vent in our mission Sunday-schools.

"The work should be especially prosecuted among the foreign population.

"Let a course of say twenty-five weekly lectures be arranged to be illustrated by the stereopticon, and treating in a simple way of the growth of our nation from its beginning until the present time. I would not have very much attention paid to the campaigns of the wars. It matters little to the Bohemian who cannot read English or to the Irishman who cannot write his name whether Braddock or King Philip fought in the war of 1812 or not.

"But it does matter that he should understand something of the early life of the colonists, something of the dangers from which they fled, the causes of the Revolution, the growth of slavery, the meaning of our republican institutions, our great industrial development, and the significance of such names as Franklin, Washington, Lincoln, Grant.

"A cornet leading a chorus of school-children, who should sing national airs, would add zest to such a lecture, the price of which should be merely nominal. I think you will generally find it better to have a price.

"In such matters people usually undervalue and are a little suspicious of what is given them freely. If a ticket costs ten cents, or if it is given as a reward of merit to the children at school, it will be vastly more appreciated.

"These lectures would be given in English wherever possible, but in the foreign districts of the city the same set could be given in translations, the speaker being an intelligent man of the nationality of the audience.

"I think you will find it better among foreigners to give these lectures in a hall rather than in a church, so as not to awaken religious prejudices. With different speakers the same lectures and pictures can be used in different parts of the city every evening in the week, thus having six or seven

SIMULTANEOUS COURSES

of the same lectures.

"After the completion of the first course much experience will have been gained in the details of management, and other courses can be formed illustrating the material resources, physical geography of our country, and the biography and literature of our great men.

"With a little music, plenty of pictures, and a speaker with a hearty, ringing voice, I think there can be no question of winning attention among these foreigners. After that, classes and clubs for reading and discussion would easily follow.

"I have spoken of two sections, the students and the teachers; the third might comprise those who could give neither work nor study, but who would give money. This money might go to any one of a dozen fields of work which the organization would help support.

"Each donor could specify the purpose for which he gives his money, whether it be temperance-reform work, free kindergartens, industrial schools, payment for detection and prosecution of law-breakers, or general running expenses. You can readily see that although there may be much voluntary, unpaid service, there will be great need of more money than I have promised to contribute.

"The fourth class would be one of the most important, comprising chiefly the solid business men and practical, public-spirited women, such as I have found here in your remarkably live Woman's Club and other organizations. These men and women would attend to such practical work as is done by our Law and Order Leagues in the different states, supplementing the often inefficient police service, and persistently insisting that the existing laws *shall be enforced.*

"This branch of the work alone would require more than one paid agent. Another line of work for this fourth class of good citizens would be an organized and ever-increasing vigilance in regard to the work of the city's servants, and the creation of a strong public sentiment which shall demand a purer, cleaner press and a suppression of the vile literature which is poisoning the imagination of thousands of our youth.

"This class of workers would be the active agents of all reforms, and unwavering in their efforts to make the primary meetings places where the moral force and the intelligence of the city shall be most powerfully felt.

"Let me illustrate what I mean in speaking of the kinds of work which this fourth class of workers can do to promote good citizenship. The successful courses of lectures on history to young people under the auspices of the

COMMERCIAL CLUB

which have been carried on here is just the kind of work which needs to be done. The prizes for essays on historical subjects offered to the school-children by the 'Daily News' is another good thing. The courses of lectures by workmen and capitalists under the auspices of the Ethical Culture Society is just the kind of work which I should like to see multiplied a hundredfold.

"All existing organizations for promoting the welfare of the community can unite in this large organization without abandoning their own methods and field of work.

"Perhaps this scheme as I have outlined it may seem to you somewhat utopian; but you will remember that what I have said is simply suggestion. The methods I leave entirely to your own excellent judgment. But whatever these may be, they will be watched with keen interest by other cities to whom I shall make the same proposition that I have made to you, provided that the results of your efforts shall justify my action in this matter.

"The little plan which I propose is

ABSOLUTELY FLEXIBLE.

One person or one circle may work in one way and one in another, each according to his own tastes and opportunities. While any one of leisure may belong to all four sections, no one need feel excluded from joining in the general good work in some way, if he have but a dollar a year to contribute, or but an hour a week for study or work.

"May I not hope that the life and youth and moral power of Chicago will join hand in hand in making this vast city great, not only in dimensions and numbers and wealth, but great in that kind of greatness which alone shall exalt a nation and give it memory. For

> 'The envious Powers of ill nor wink nor sleep: —
> Be therefore timely wise,
> Nor laugh when this one steals and that one lies,
> As if your luck could cheat those sleepless spies,
> Till the deaf Fury comes your house to sweep.' "

As Miss Brewster stood a moment with silently bowed head and then sank into her chair there was a hush. Every one had been thrilled by the clear, quiet, intense tones of her voice, and there was an instinctive refrain from applause which marked the deep feeling which her words had created.

Dr. T—— rose to speak, but at this juncture the writer, whose office had been discovered, was politely requested by an usher to withdraw. It was subsequently learned, however, that a committee consisting of seven ladies and eighteen gentlemen was elected from those present, and they are to meet next week for selection of a superintendent, and to establish their organization.

CHAPTER XIII.

After leaving Chicago in June, we passed a wonderful fortnight among the glories of the Yellowstone Park. Here Mildred seemed to throw off all care, and to breathe freely for the first time in six months.

After leaving the Park, some of our party were called back to the East, but aunt, cousin Will, and Alice still accompanied us.

On touching the Northern Pacific Railroad again our car was attached to a train filled for the most part with immigrants.

At the stations where stops were made we always alighted to take a little exercise in walking up and down the platform, and to chat with the Indians and half-breeds, who greatly interested Mildred.

I must admit that for my part I found the wrinkled old crones and dirty braves rather disgusting, though occasionally a few who still retained their primitive adornments of vermilion paint and eagle's feathers furnished a bit of picturesqueness that was interesting.

At one stopping-place, there being no Indians visible, we turned our attention to the crowd of European peasants who poured out of the immigrant cars, and strolling about among them we amused ourselves by studying the stolid, square faces, and giving candy to the sturdy, little flaxen-haired children who gazed in round-eyed wonder at us.

Presently I saw that Mildred, who had slipped away from me, was holding a hurried and earnest conversation with a sad-eyed little woman who with quivering lips was telling the story of how her *Mann* had died on the voyage and been buried at sea, and how she was left to make the rest of the long journey alone with her three helpless little ones.

"It goes to my heart," said Mildred as we returned to our car, "to think of that woman and those poor, fatherless little things in this strange land. Not one of the people with her is her friend and neighbor, and I don't know what is to become of her."

"How perfectly dreadful!" exclaimed Alice calmly as she scanned her cards.

"Gad, that 's tough!" ejaculated Will, and then we proceeded with our whist, which had been interrupted by this little episode.

I watched Mildred. I knew that this would not be the end of it with her, though the others soon forgot about it. She played carelessly and was beaten. She was thinking not of the game, but of the tired, broken-hearted wife in the next car who had so courageously said good-by to the Fatherland a month before with her brave Fritz, and must now end the long, wearisome journey alone, poor and friendless.

Presently she rose and left the car.

"Let me go with you," called Will, and followed her, while I lay down on the sofa for a nap and knew nothing more until an hour later. Then I waked to find Mildred kneeling by my side and smilingly patting my cheeks.

"What do you say to having an adventure, Ruby?" she asked. "I have a capital scheme; just listen to it. Will and I have been to see that poor little woman, and it is pathetic to see how she clings to us and looks to us for assistance. She will be utterly helpless when she gets to the end of her journey. Her passage is prepaid through, but that is all. She has only three dollars left, and the agent who has all these people in charge is a hard-faced man who cannot be trusted to concern himself in the least about her.

"She opened her whole heart to me while Will amused the children, and I have learned all her simple little story. I had n't the heart to leave her until I had promised to see her through to her journey's end."

"But you forget, Mildred," I cried astonished, and sitting up quickly; "these people are all going to switch off at the Junction and go twenty-five miles on another road. The conductor told us so, you know, and we can't follow them, for it would make us a day late in reaching Tacoma, and auntie really must have her ulcerated tooth attended to." She had in fact hardly held her head up that day and was suffering terribly.

"Certainly," said Mildred; "I have thought of all that, and it is all arranged. Alice and Will are to go on with her in this car and take the best of care of her, and if you will join Hélène [the maid] and me, we will go with the immigrants and see little Frau Kopp well started in the new home before we leave her. I consider it quite a fortunate circumstance on the whole. I have wanted an excuse to mingle with the people more and learn something further of frontier life than can be seen from the windows of a parlor-car."

Will remonstrated vigorously, however. "See here, Mildred," he said seriously, "it will never do in the world for you to start off this way at night into an unknown region, and ride in these wretched cars. Very likely you will have to sleep on a straw bed in some vile little tavern no one knows where. You can give this woman some money, and"—

"I haven't time to argue," interposed Mildred, packing her bag. "I have made up my mind to go. Don't think me stubborn, but money can't do for that disconsolate, frightened little woman what I can do. She has not a single friend; her baby is ill; some Yankee sharper would swindle her out of her money; and, besides, I want to go. I want to know from experience a little about the life of these people."

"Then if I can't dissuade you I must go with you. Mother can"—

"No, she can't; and I can't let you leave her, cousin Will," replied Mildred with quiet determination. "Nothing can possibly happen to us. We are in a civilized land, and robbers are not wont to attack an immigrant train. We shall not be hurt by 'roughing it' for twenty-four hours, and if anything happens to delay us longer we will telegraph you."

"Let me go *instead* of you," insisted Will, still frowning upon the project; "there is no need of you three interrupting your journey when I can manage the affair perfectly well."

"But you don't speak German and I do," replied Mildred, decisively.

There was nothing more to be said, and we bade them good-by, with no misgiving on our part, and stepped into the uncomfortable, stuffy immigrant cars. Mildred seated herself beside little Frau Kopp and held in her lap chubby two-year-old Hans, dressed like a little old man in the clumsy, German peasant fashion. Hélène and I meanwhile took turns in occupying the only vacant seat in the car. The motley crowd of Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, Germans, and Bohemians, who for five or six days and nights had been traveling together in heat and discomfort, sat nodding sleepily and apparently unexcited at the near approach of their long journey's end.

All the afternoon it had looked lowering in the west, and as the dim kerosene lamps were lighted one by one, we heard the dash of rain upon the roof of the car, and by the flashes of lightning could discern with our faces pressed close to the panes that we were just entering upon the track of a storm. Trees were uprooted and lay in confusion beside the track. But we could see little, and I gave scarcely a thought to it as I sat on the hard, uncushioned seat, with my lap full of bags and wraps, and watched Mildred a few seats in front of me as she talked cheerily to the tired little children. Our destination was to be the little mining town of Blivens, and we were to reach it at half-past eight.

On we went whizzing through the darkness, the train rocking from side to side, and the red-kerchiefed, brown faces of the women lighting up picturesquely the dark mysterious shadows. We were about to reach our destination, and I had just risen to rest my stiffened limbs, when suddenly I was thrown headlong down the aisle, and a hideous grating, jarring noise drowned every other sound. Then a sense of falling, rolling, pitching, of absolute darkness, and of frightful pain.

I lay I know not how long. One foot and hand were pinioned under something hard and immovable, the other foot doubled under me, and my head twisted awry and also immovable. I was lying between two bodies, one above and one under me. Something warm was dripping down over my face, and shrieks and dying groans rent the air.

I was too stunned at first to think what it meant. I was conscious only of pain, horrible pain, such as I had never dreamed of before. I could not cry out, I could not move. Oh, would help never come?

What was this horrible thing that had happened? A moment ago — no, was it not an hour ago? — we were alive and well; and now? Oh, why had God let this horrible thing happen? And Mildred — where was she? Perhaps she was dead; and I should be dead too very soon, and nothing would matter much.

I remember thinking then, strangely enough, "I am glad she has made her will."

Suddenly a dull glow, a gleam of light, then a hoarse yell of despair from a score of voices, "Da ist Feuer!" "*The train is on fire!*"

My heart stopped beating. Were the horrors of a holocaust to be added to this agony?

Oh, the long, fearful minutes! A horrid glare lit up the blackness of the night, and nearer, nearer crept the crackling flames?

O Christ! will no one come to rescue us, will not the clouds in mercy pour down their treasures to stop this demon flame!

But no! The rain had ceased, and on, on, steadily on came the frightful scorching flames.

It was now as light as day. In the red glare I could see black figures moving swiftly, men running wildly about and desperately pulling and tearing at the splintered sides of the car.

But oh, how feeble all their efforts! How utterly futile seemed all human strength to cope with these frightful forces that held us relentlessly in their grasp!

"Well, it will soon be over, soon be over," I groaned to myself. "The torture shall not be long if with my free hand I can get a quicker death," I resolved in the desperation of my agony.

It seemed hours to us wretches lying there 'twixt hell and heaven, but I suppose it was only minutes. Then there was a cracking, a breaking. An iron crowbar in the hands of a man had broken through the débris and was lifting the frightful weight from my arm.

I could see his face distinctly, as with the giant strength of a madman, but with the clear eye of one who was a born general, he marshaled his panic-stricken followers and bade them aid him.

"Here, Jim," he shouted hoarsely, his voice rising above the roar of the flames, "hold on there! Now you and Tom and the rest, *pull!—pull as you never pulled before!*"

But it was all in vain; as well try to lift a mountain.

"Take this child," groaned a muffled voice at my side, and as the strong arms of the stranger lifted little Hans limp and lifeless, and hastily laid him in the soft dark mud behind him, I saw for the first time Mildred's white face beside me.

"There ain't no use, boss," cried the men in a frenzy, and stopping to wring their hands. "We can't do nothing; *they've got to burn alive!*"

"Then for God's sake give me your pistol or your knife!" I cried fiercely.

"Yes, Mildred," I protested, "it's right, it's right. If we must die, let it be quickly, and not by inches."

But Mildred did not hear. She was looking at the stranger with wild, staring eyes, and for an instant, as if paralyzed, he gazed at her. Then a look of such agony as I never saw on a human face convulsed his features, and he cried, "*Boys, once more! I must save this woman!*" and while they stood wringing helpless hands, he, with knotted veins and starting eyes, made one herculean effort, and Mildred was in his arms and free.

I saw them stagger and fall together, while the bright blood in a crimson torrent poured from his lips and dyed her white, clinging hands.

Then I knew nothing more. I have a vague recollection of a roar as of Niagara filling my ears, a sense of being torn limb from limb, a shuddering thought that this indeed was death and the end had come — and then blackness.

I knew not how many hours or days had passed. When I opened my eyes I was lying on a hard straw bed on the floor of an unplastered attic room. I could see nothing from where I lay but the corner of a window through whose panes the sun streamed in, scarce hindered by the torn blue paper curtain. It shone upon the gorgeous patchwork counterpane upon my bed. It dazzled my eyes, which felt strangely weak.

I tried to move, but could not stir; to speak, but could utter no sound.

Presently, as I lay with closed eyes, I felt that some one had stooped from behind and looked at me. Then I heard a husky whisper, —

"She 's sleepin' real nateral, don't ye worry a mite. *She 's* agoin' ter git on, you can jest bet on that." This was followed by a heavy tread which jarred my head with every movement like that of a giant trying to walk on tiptoe. There was a creaking of a door, then a slow, soft thump, thump, thump down the uncarpeted stairs, and all was still.

I lay quiet, wondering what it all meant. Where was I, and what could be the matter? My head was confused. Was Mildred — hush, there was a voice near by talking low; it seemed behind me.

"But it was not so; how could you have thought it so?"

The voice sounded like Mildred's. It was weak and trembling.

"I went East to find you after it was all over between Agnes and me, but they said you were engaged, you had gone abroad. I could do nothing. I came back; I had my work, and I tried to live."

The other voice I did not know; it was husky and broken.

There was silence again, and I heard a bustling and tramping about below, and outside the window locusts buzzing shrilly.

Voices again. I could not but hear. It was Mildred's voice. "But did you love me then in the beginning?"

There was no answer at first; then it came, a little stronger and steadier than before. "I should have loved you then if I had dared, but I was pledged to Agnes; she had promised to be my wife. There came a day at Concord when I saw my danger. I knew that I must not dare to see you again. I prayed that I might be kept from being false to the woman whom I had asked to love me, so I went away and tried to forget. After all, I had known you for only a few days, and I had known her from childhood. She was true as steel. She trusted me; and when with her again I was glad to find at last that life could still be rich and sweet, and I be spared from baseness."

"Then why, why" — Mildred began; but she hesitated, and her voice died away.

"It came about in this way," said the other voice after a pause. "I had studied for the ministry, you know. Agnes had rejoiced to think that she was to share my work. I had decided from the first to give myself to the home mission work either in the far West or among the colored people at the South. She was all enthusiasm and zeal. She was a noble woman; but oh — well, it is a long story, a long story." Another pause; then, "Do you know how unjust and bitter a woman can be when she thinks that she alone is intrusted with the decrees of the Almighty?

"As her lover, I must be frank with her, I must conceal nothing. I told her all, little by little, of what I had come to believe and see. It only made her tremble with horror. She saw that I was not ready to preach the gospel which she believed. She felt that I was going no-whither. 'You have denied

God's Word and made your reason your God,' she said. 'I can never dare trust my future with you unless you promise me once and forever to abandon reading these dreadful books which are leading you farther and farther from the truth.'

"I tried argument, but it was of no avail. 'I am no logician; I cannot argue and reason with a college-bred man like you. You could readily refute my simple talk to your own satisfaction,' she said; 'but all the philosophy in the world cannot change my faith. My husband's God must be the one whom I serve.'

"I did not know how I had really loved her until I found I was breaking her heart. It was pitiful. I tried to show her how I loved the same God whom she served, but she said, while the tears choked her voice:

"'No, Ralph, let us not deceive ourselves; we look at the world in a radically different way. There can be no compromises so long as this exists.' So we parted."

"And then you—you came here?" queried Mildred faintly.

"Yes. My life at first seemed wrecked; but I had my work, and though I could not ask any Missionary Board to send me out, I determined to come alone and serve God, if not in the pulpit, then perhaps as well some other way.

"I came with the first miners. I lived with them and worked for them. I helped them build their first log huts. I opened the first store here, but as

I sold no liquor it was hard to contend with the other shops which soon were rivals of mine.

"But I made enough to live on. That was all I cared for. I had come here to save men, not to save money.

"First I started a reading-room, here in my room. It was open to them all, and after a while we had an evening class. Then I began a Sunday school, and they all came at first just to oblige me because I asked them, but afterwards because they liked it. Then at last I began a regular Sunday service.

"I love these rough fellows, and they have learned to love me. I do what I can for them. I would not change my work for the richest parish in the country. I have the satisfaction of knowing that I am helping to shape the future of this whole region.

"These men have loved me in a rough, hearty way, and I thank God for it, for sometimes the loneliness has been terrible.

"Agnes married a missionary and went to India, and after a while I saw that it was best so, though it was bitter to me at first.

"I felt that you, the only other woman for whom I ever had cared, had forgotten me. I did not dare to think that you had remembered me, but I could not rest until I knew. I made the long journey East. I felt that I could not be denied until I had heard the final word from your lips. I reached Boston the very day that you sailed from New

York; and I heard that you were to marry a rich man on your return.

"Well, I tried to bear it as best I could. I came back to my work. After the little glimpse of civilization and comfort that I had had, this dreary little place seemed drearier still; but I had brought books with me, and they helped me.

"One day, as I sat here feeling lonely, wretched, forlorn, I picked up my Thomas à Kempis, and suddenly a light seemed to break in upon me, and I said, 'O fool, you with strength and vigor and opportunities, you who have the inherited wisdom of the world at your command, you the heir of all the ages, the son of a King! — shall *you* mourn and complain because Heaven denies you one boon? When was it ever decreed that you should be so favored above all other mortals as to be completely happy in this world of pain? Should the servant be above his Master?'

"So then I tried to learn to be content. I found something better than happiness, — it has been blessedness.

"I study when I can. But I am studying humanity chiefly. I am learning how to fill the needs of these brothers of mine. I am trying to show them that there is something better than the gold which seems to them the only thing worth working for. Yes, I love my work."

There was a note of exultation in the voice, weak though it was, which thrilled me. I think I must have dozed, for the voices again sounded faint and far away. Presently as I returned to consciousness I heard the voice saying in little broken gasps of pain, "But oh, Mildred darling, do you know what this means? Do you know what it means when you promise to be willing to take me for better or for worse? You love books and pictures and music and beauty. Can I consent to see you deprived of them all, to share my lot?

"You do not know me yet. You are grateful to me for saving you; but it was simple humanity — humanity, nothing more. I was a fool to speak out as I did just now; it was only my weakness and selfishness. No, I cannot let you bind yourself yet; wait till you are well, till your friends come.

"You say they have wealth. What will they think of your giving them all up to settle in this dismal place and be the wife of a man who has not five hundred dollars in the world, and can offer you nothing but a life of toil?

"No, you shall be free. Forget that I dared to speak, that I dared for a moment to think — What? Why — why, Mildred, you are laughing!"

"Oh," said Mildred in a different tone, "I — that is, I was only thinking of *love in a cottage.* I am not afraid of being poor; I can work too."

"Ah, yes; but being poor in Boston, where you have the largest public library in the world, and the free Lowell lectures, and a glorious symphony concert now and then for only fifty cents, is one thing; and to be poor here, to stand at the washtub, and to scrub and clean and bake and mend, is quite another. There would be little call here for the work which you love and can do so well. These rough, hard-working men have little time or inclination to hear of Goethe or Dante.

"It would be cruel for me to let these soft, white hands grow hard and rough, to let your life which elsewhere could be so rich run to waste here."

"Would it not be far more cruel," asked Mildred tenderly, "to keep me from the man I love?"

"Mildred dear, I am awake," I tried to say, for through my bewildered brain the meaning of all this had begun to penetrate, and I realized for the first time that I had been hearing what was too sacred for any other ears than those of Mildred and her lover, Ralph Everett.

But the words choked in my throat, there was only an inarticulate murmur, and the voices ceased.

CHAPTER XIV.

> "And a voice said in mastery while I strove,
> Guess now who holds thee? —
> 'Death,' I said;
> But there the silver answer rang,
> 'Not Death, but Love.'"
> SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE.

SOME time elapsed ere I divined where we were, and then I discovered that we had been carried to Mr. Everett's house and were all lying in the attic over the store. Mildred had been placed on his cot-bed by the book-shelves, and he lay on a lounge a few feet distant.

After a time my straw bed, which had been borrowed from a neighbor, was turned about so that I could see them. I was too weak to talk, but I loved to lie and look at them when the terrible pain gave me a moment's respite to think of anything beside my own woes.

The little town was crowded; not a spare room but had been gladly given up to the sufferers.

Little by little I learned all that had happened. A tree had been uprooted in the wild storm and had fallen across the track. The engine, the baggage car, and the first car had been derailed. The loss of life had not been great. Poor Hélène, the little German woman and her baby were the only ones who had not been rescued.

But in all the cottages around lay the helpless, wounded people, who had come so far over land and sea only to meet this terrible fate.

The telegraph lines had been thrown down in the storm, and it was two days before word could be sent and the débris cleared away so that trains could come from the west. The little German doctor who had set my bones while I was unconscious, and had left medicine for us all, did not appear but once or twice after the first call, for there were a score or more of poor, maimed creatures, some of them his own countrymen, who needed him even more sorely than we.

What would have become of us during those three days of partial unconsciousness and suffering and impatient waiting for our friends if it had not been for "Jim"!

Jim was a character. Not even the pain could so wholly banish my sense of humor as to prevent my seeing that.

I could not learn whether there was a woman in town or not, but I afterwards heard that Jim had let it be understood that he was commissioned by the "boss" to be his sole attendant, and warn every one else to keep his distance. Half a dozen times a day the big, freckled, red-haired fellow creaked up the stairs in his stocking feet, bringing water and gruel and bouquets of gorgeous nasturtiums and crimson phlox from his little garden patch across the way. Jim had an eye for the beautiful, and thought it a pity that we should have nothing better to look upon than the long rows of sombre books which lined one side of the walls and formed Mr. Everett's library.

Accordingly the poor man had stripped his own bachelor premises of all the precious adornments sent him by his sweetheart for the last three Christmases. There was a gilded sugar-scoop tied with pink ribbons, and a remarkable landscape painted on the concave surface of the interior. There was also a rolling-pin with a covering of French blue plush, adorned with gilded handles, and bearing on its surface a large thermometer surmounted by a gilded spread eagle.

These were especially devoted to my benefit, for which I was duly appreciative. Over Mildred's bed was hung a "God Bless Our Home," wonderfully worked in the national colors; and beside Mr. Everett's sofa was placed a gilded milking-stool of convenient height for holding vials and glasses, the legs artistically interlaced with scarlet ribbons, and the seat decorated with a painting, whether of Vesuvius in eruption or a dish of crushed tomatoes, I was never quite sure.

From the low window near which my bed was drawn Jim proudly pointed out to me his own quarters opposite. The house was an unpainted wooden structure of one story, and evidently possessed a slanting roof with gables, though the architect had erected a sham façade which gave the appearance, when one took a front view, of a house with a flat roof.

Extending across the whole front of the house was a sign of unique character painted in black on a pink ground, of which I subjoin an exact copy.

1886.
FRANKLIN
PHILOSOPHIC
HERMITAGE
INDEPENDENT SCIENTIFIC REPAIR SHOP.
CLOCKS, COOPERING, CHAIN SAWS FILED
TIN WARE, POLITICS & THEOLOGY TINKERED
HUZZAH FOR
THE UNION
LABOR PARTY.

"Jim is an odd stick," Mr. Everett once said with a feeble smile, as the awkward fellow was heard anathematizing himself as he descended the stairs after an accidental bang of the door, which made us all wince.

"Jim is odd, but he has mighty good stuff in him. There is n't anything that fellow would not do for me, though when I first came here he was pretty fiery; a regular dynamiter you would have thought. But since I started the debating club, and got him to reading history a little, he has calmed down a good deal, and has come to find that hard facts are worth more than all his former rhetorical pyrotechnics about the down-trodden workingman."

At last, with pale and terror-stricken faces, came aunt Madison and Will and Alice with Dr. Ellsworth from Tacoma. Then ensued a new order of things. Jim vanished, talking was forbidden, the noise everywhere disappeared, and the clumsy carts passed silently beneath our window over a thick bed of straw, while tall screens, improvised from sheets and clothes-horses, separated us from each other the greater part of the time. For there was not another room in town to be had, and the little grocery below had been metamorphosed into sleeping apartments for our four attendants. They alternately watched and slept.

The new physician threw away the old medicines, substituted new ones, and looked with grave anxiety on Mildred's flushed face and bounding pulse. She had no bones broken and but a slight wound, and had insisted that my broken bones be set first.

After the first shock, the excitement of meeting Mr. Everett and anxiety for us all had sustained her, but now she was sinking fast. The delay in attending to her at the beginning was telling upon her. Whether it was the July heat, the sight of so many faces, and the necessary disturbance when so many were forced to be in one room, I do not know, but as the days went by none of us grew better.

Mildred was too ill to be moved to her car. Mr. Everett, though in a fair way to recover, was too weak to stir after his terrible hemorrhage and the strain upon his whole system; while I could not endure to be touched without extreme pain. So during the July days we lay there together in the unfinished attic room, watching the doctor come and go, and tended by loving hands that divided their ministrations and the delicacies that they brought with the suffering ones who lay not far distant.

"Do everything for them that I would have had done," were Mildred's words to cousin Will, which he understood as Mr. Everett did not. For no one was allowed to tell him that this sweet girl lying there, who I alone knew was his promised wife, was no longer the teacher whom he thought her.

But the doctor's face looked graver and graver as the days wore on. He sat up half the night with us, performing the combined duties of nurse and physician.

One morning, as he came in looking weary and jaded after but four hours' rest, he sat down by Mildred's bed, with a face that in spite of his habitual professional attempt at gayety could not conceal the gravest concern.

He felt her pulse and motioned furtively to aunt Madison, who stood with brimming eyes studying his every motion. Mildred glanced up and read the meaning of his look. She said nothing for a moment; then with an effort to keep her voice steady she said, quietly, "Doctor, be honest with me: shall I live?"

"My dear, I" — and the doctor coughed and turned away his head; "I — we" — he glanced at Mr. Everett, who with eyes that were blazing like coals in their sockets had half risen on his elbow and seemed devouring every word, — "my dear, I hope so."

"Yes, I understand," replied Mildred calmly, after a searching look at the physician's half-averted face, "I understand, and I am not afraid; but it is necessary that some things be done, and done quickly."

She lay a few moments quietly thinking. No one stirred or spoke, and the silence was broken only by aunt Madison's half-stifled sobs, as she turned away to hide her emotion. Presently Mildred looked up.

"Is there a lawyer in the village?" she asked. "I want to change my — that is, I want to attend to a few little matters of business that must not be left undone."

"No," replied Mr. Everett huskily; "there was one who did a little business, but he died a month ago."

Mildred said nothing for a few minutes, then looking up, with a pale face and lips drawn tense, she said, "Auntie, I must be married to-day."

We all gave an involuntary cry. Mr. Everett drew his hand over his eyes. Dr. Ellsworth and aunt Madison exchanged looks of amazement as if to say, "Is the girl beside herself?" I alone understood what it all meant.

"Yes, auntie," Mildred continued. "I have not yet told you; I meant to, by and by. I did not think it was to be here and now; I meant to have it all so different; but my strength is going, I do not know whether I shall — I dare not wait."

She gave a little gasp of pain, and was silent a moment; then she added, in a voice which I could scarcely hear, "I have told Mr. Everett that I love him. I have promised to be his wife."

No one spoke when Mildred had finished, and she lay with closed eyes, while aunt Madison stood as if struck dumb, gazing incredulously from one to the other. She had learned that they were old friends, that he had saved her life; perhaps she had suspected more, but this sudden announcement paralyzed her for a moment.

Mr. Everett half rose again from his couch and leaned toward Mildred as if to speak, but the words died on his lips, and he sank back exhausted and lay motionless.

Aunt Madison softly left the room, but soon returned, and kneeling by Mildred's side they whispered together. What was said I never knew, but I was certain that Mildred's thought was for Ralph's inheritance.

An hour later, another physician, who had been telegraphed for the previous day, arrived. He stepped softly into the room, and for a long time gazed intently at Mildred as she lay asleep, and then he slipped out, and I heard faint murmurings of voices in the room below as the two physicians held a consultation.

"Oh, Mildred, my more than sister," I inwardly groaned; "must I lie here helpless and see your precious life going from us? Were you snatched from the jaws of death but to fall back again a helpless victim? If this must be, oh that we had died together before rescue came!"

I had given my whole heart to this girl. I had loved her with a love which made all other friendships of my life seem as nothing. In loving her I felt that I had first learned what love meant, and my little, petty life had been made deeper, broader, and full of hitherto undreamed-of possibilities.

The hours wore away, the hours of Mildred's wedding-day. "Send Jim for Mr. Lightfoot," Mr. Everett had said to Will. "He will know where to find him. He is the only regular clergyman within fifty miles."

He had been sent for post-haste, and that evening, just as the sun was sinking in the west and lighting up in gorgeous splendor the little attic where we lay, a tall, gray-haired man in a rusty, black frock-coat, and with prayer-book in hand, climbed softly up the creaking stairs and paused in the doorway, glancing in a tender, fatherly way at the two pale faces which looked up to greet his coming.

The windows were opened, and the blue paper curtains had disappeared to be replaced by white muslin ones. A dozen pitchers were placed around the room containing the brilliant wild flowers of the neighborhood that had been sent in by Jim and his friends. A wreath of golden-rod and purple asters at Jim's desire was laid upon the white counterpane at Mildred's feet. For the news that there was for some strange reason to be a marriage had spread like wildfire, and many a rough, sunburned man had tapped softly at the door of the little shop to ask what it meant, and beg Alice, who stood on guard, to be allowed to come up and stand, if only in the doorway, and see the "boss" married.

One day, a month later, Alice told me all about it. "You don't suppose, Miss, he 's agoin ter die?" asked one of them, as they stood around the door in a quiet, awe-struck group. "I don't know what we fellers 'ud ever do without him," he added huskily, as he drew the back of his grimy hand across his eyes.

"I don't go much on religion," said another, who sat on the doorstep leaning his head in his hands; "but I 'll be blamed ef that ere feller, with all his college larnin' and soft-spoken ways, a-comin' out here and roughin' it with us, and a-nursin' and a-teachin' and a-helpin' of us all, — I'll be blamed if that ain't the Christianest thing I ever see."

I did not wonder that these men loved their teacher.

Ralph — I learned to call him that afterwards, so I call him so now, for it seems more natural — Ralph Everett had a face such as one sees only once or twice in a lifetime. I did not wonder that Mildred loved it so that she kept awake to look at it as he slept.

The forehead was broad and low, from which the brown hair rose thick and abruptly, framing the strong, almost rugged face. The eyes — such eyes! They were the frankest, truest eyes that ever glorified a human face. Not even Mildred's eyes were like those, although hers could sparkle or command or grow wonderfully soft and tender. The chin and mouth were hidden in a luxuriant blond beard, in which gleamed now and then a silver thread. The broad chest, the sunburned face and hands which the pallor of sickness was fast restoring to their pristine whiteness, all evinced a strong, active life, strangely contrasting with the pitiful helplessness which had now prostrated it.

But surely strength and health would soon return; surely love would triumph; and these two, so strangely reunited in the very jaws of death, would some day make all previous joys as nothing to that deep, full, complete satisfaction with which heaven should crown their lives; these two, who seemed of all the world the ones most worthy of such blessedness.

I had dreamed it all out. Some beautiful day in the months to come I should stand as bride's-maid beside a happy, white-robed bride. There would be flowers and music and smiles. There would be the strong, gallant lover, the one man of all the world who was worthy to wed my precious Mildred. The man whom she would always know had married her for herself alone, a man whom wealth or happiness could not tempt, who should nobly help her in the great work that she had set herself to do.

To tell the truth, I had thought also, with almost a pang of jealousy, what this would mean to me, and what my life would be without her.

I could scarcely realize that now, here, in this brown, unplastered attic room, in a dreary frontier mining town, with no music but the chirping of the August crickets in the little field behind us, without wedding-robe or wedding guests, my Mildred was to become a bride.

They bolstered me up to see it all, as well as could be done with my splintered leg and arm. I was trembling violently, and the doctor gave me a sedative powder and sat by me with hand on my pulse. Ralph's lounge had been moved beside Mildred's cot. His face was as deadly pale as her own.

"Mildred," he whispered hoarsely, — they had not spoken to each other since in the morning when she had said she would marry him, — "Mildred, have you counted the cost? Think, darling, you may get well; do you realize what you are doing?"

"Yes, far better than you do," she replied with a faint smile.

The clergyman quietly took his place at the foot of the bed, and as the solemn words of the Episcopal marriage service broke the silence, Mildred, who had been lying with closed eyes, started visibly. She had not before observed that the clergyman had a prayer-book. I could see that she was greatly agitated, and instantly divined the cause.

She had always declared that she would never under any conditions allow herself to be married by that service.

I knew her reasons for this and how strongly she felt about it, so I understood what her consternation must be now. All this flashed through my brain before the clergyman had read three lines.

Then Mildred gave a little gasp. A crimson flush leaped into her cheeks, and I knew her mind was made up. Instantly her voice broke in, strangely clear and strong.

"Please wait, sir," she said. "I beg your pardon. I did not know this service was to be used. I cannot be married by it. Can you not substitute some other?"

Every one but Ralph was thunderstruck; but they were getting inured to surprises, and no one spoke while the clergyman, for a moment too shocked to reply, gazed in blank amazement into Mildred's earnest eyes.

But Ralph understood, and said calmly, "No, dear, he cannot. I should have thought of this before. I am not willing that you should promise what this service contains. So, in the presence of God and of these witnesses, we two alone will bind ourselves lawfully in the marriage bond."

Then, holding Mildred's right hand in his, while the minister stood wonderingly aside, he said with clear, unshaken voice:

"I take thee, Mildred, to be my lawful, wedded wife, to love and to serve, to comfort and cherish, to honor and keep, so long as we both shall live; and thereto, God helping, I plight thee my troth."

A deathly pallor had crept over Mildred's face.

Just then the last rays of the setting sun for a moment streamed into the little room, irradiating its bare walls, and transfiguring with magic light those two faces on which we were gazing with breathless silence.

Then, after a moment's pause, Mildred with a great effort leaned an inch nearer, and gently taking Ralph's brown hand in both her slender white ones, said, with blanched lips:

"I take thee, Ralph, to be my lawful, wedded husband, to love and to serve, to comfort and cherish, to honor and keep, so long as we both shall live; and thereto, God helping, I plight thee my troth."

After the last words had died tremblingly away on Mildred's lips, the clergyman at a sign from her lifted his voice in prayer, while Alice kneeled sobbing by the bedside, and over my eyes there came a mist. My senses reeled, and I remember no more.

Weeks afterward Alice told me that Mr. Lightfoot had gone away with a fatherly benediction, and a purse the richer by a thousand dollars for the marriage service which he did not perform.

The days went by, and I knew but little. The tall, white screen shut out everything from me. I was too weak to ask about Mildred, but I knew that she had not left us. Surely God had been merciful. She was still to live and love and bless the world.

At last came a day, — it was the first day of

September, I recall, — the very day when we had planned to reach San Francisco on our return from the Alaskan trip which we had contemplated; the screen was removed, and Mildred and Ralph, still pale and wan, but with the glow of returning health lighting up their happy faces, sat beside me and whispered words of farewell.

"Oh, Mildred, you did not die, you are alive," I sobbed weakly, too happy to keep the tears back.

"Yes, darling," she said, "for it was love that saved me. I had something to live for, and I fought hard. Now I am to leave you for a while. My husband and I" (how proudly she said that), "my husband and I are going away."

"Her aunt Madison has kindly offered us her beautiful, private car, and we are going away for a long rest before we come back to our work," said Ralph innocently, and I saw that for some reason Mildred had still kept him ignorant of the fact that he had married a great heiress instead of a poor teacher. "This is to be our honey-moon, you know," he added, looking at her with the lovelight shining in his eyes. "We are going quietly. No one but Jim is to know of it, for the doctor says we must spare ourselves the excitement of the good-byes which would have to be said if the people knew we were going. The men have been clamoring for a month to see me, and it has been hard for me to keep quiet and not let them come."

"How would you feel," asked his wife in a careless tone, "if you had married a rich woman, who would ask you to go away and never come back to work here again?" and Mildred, who was holding my hand, gave it a mischievous little squeeze as she looked demurely out of the window and awaited his reply.

"I don't know. I am afraid I could not quite forgive her unless she gave me better work to do elsewhere. I could not be idle, you know, even with you, darling," he answered, smiling at the bright face beside him.

"Ah, the world is large; there are many who need us; rich or poor, we will find our work somewhere," said Mildred softly, as if to herself. Then as Jim's steps were heard at the door she started.

"Come, Ralph, one last look at your books and room, it may be long before we return. Kiss Ruby, too; you must be her brother now, you know."

Two warm kisses were on my cheek, then the door opened and shut, and they were gone.

Everything had been arranged for my comfort, and a month later, when I was able to travel in a private car which Mildred had sent us, aunt and Alice, cousin Will and I, were on the Northern Pacific Road again, bound eastward. And with us went the motherless little Karl and Annchen to find a new home and many friends.

One day, as we were speeding along over the Dakota prairies, Alice and I fell to talking as usual about the summer that was past and its strange,

strange ending. Suddenly Alice exclaimed, "But, Ruby, I never thought to ask you before; *do* you understand why Mildred, on her deathbed as we supposed, should have stopped that minister? I thought I understood most of her ideas, but *that* was inexplicable to me."

"Yes, I understand it, I suppose, for I once had an argument with her about it," I replied. "I remember we had been to a stylish wedding at Trinity. There were ten bridesmaids, and the bride was dressed like a princess, and I remember how, as we drove away, Mildred exclaimed that she would rather have been married in a print dress in a log-cabin and promise what was honorable and true, than to have had the beautiful display which this bride had, and make such promises as she had done.

"'It is the most beautiful service in the world,' I stoutly maintained; 'pray what can you object to in it?'

"'In the first place, the giving away of the bride is a humiliating thing,' she said: 'it is a relic of the feudal times, when a woman actually *was* given away. It implies dependence; a woman is thus simply passed along from the guardianship of one man to that of another.'

"This was a novel idea which impressed me at first as being needlessly crotchety. 'Then, of course,' I replied, 'you object to the promise to obey.'

"'Certainly,' said Mildred. 'I should not respect myself if I could make such a promise. Obedience implies authority, and a man and his wife are equal. They do not stand in the relation of master and servant, employer and employee, or parent and child.'

"'Yes; but it does n't mean anything,' I expostulated, 'it is simply a form.'

"'So much the worse,' was her uncompromising answer. 'I will have no idle forms, no humiliating promises which I should not intend to keep. If I ever find the man whom I can marry, I think I shall love him enough not to be selfish and willful, and he will love me enough to respect me as his equal. There can be no question of authority and obedience in the true marriage.

"'Then, moreover,' she said, 'I object to the man's making the promise, "With all my worldly goods I thee endow." In nine cases out of ten he does nothing of the sort, and the wife usually asks for every dollar that she gets!'

"So you perceive that after hearing her say this I was not so much astounded as the rest of you were," I concluded.

"Well," said Alice, drawing a long breath and looking meditatively at the diamond engagement-ring on her white finger, "I never in my life saw such an extraordinary girl as Mildred.

"Now, I have vowed that I would never be married but by that beautiful time-honored service. Dear me! if we all took everything to heart as literally as she does, what would become of society?"

"It would probably learn to speak truth and not lies," I answered.

CHAPTER XV.

In the next few months I had many letters from Mildred and Ralph, letters full of the warm interest in life which came with returning health and were an index of unceasing thought and activity in numberless directions. Scarcely a state or territory from Utah to Virginia was left unvisited and unbenefited by their brief stay.

Their course was not merely in the beaten track, a superficial glimpse of the larger towns and fashionable resorts, but far away from railroads and civilization. On horseback tours in forest and mountain regions they passed from cabin to cabin among poor whites and blacks, studying the people and their possibilities, the country and its resources.

The letters which Mildred sent me during these months would fill half a volume, but I can find space for only one extract from them.

"Oh, my dear," she once wrote, "I thought I knew before how much there was that needed to be done, but I am finding every day, after all, how little I actually realized the true state of things. It is not so much the physical discomfort that appeals to my pity, as the apathy, the ignorance and lack of ambition for anything better; the bitter religious and political prejudices that still linger, and the spectacle of a population increasing in numbers and increasing in illiteracy.

"Of course there are thousands of exceptions to all these observations. I am not pessimistic.

"The South is awaking, is advancing rapidly in many ways, and, as I pass swiftly from place to place and see new facts and phases of life, I am constantly forced to reconsider and readjust my previous convictions. Yet on the whole the main impression which I had in the beginning survives. Here is a vast territory practically not so well known to us Northerners as most European countries, and with a people who know us far less than we know them; and here, as I am sometimes almost compelled to believe, is the field for all my work and energy.

"If I had twice my wealth, I believe I should spend half of it in the South. I would engage a few thousand of the best of our 'surplus' women of New England and scatter them through the length and breadth of this Southern land, and set them at work doing some of the things which so need to be done.

"As it is, I have picked out certain strategic places where I shall put a few at work, and for the boy or girl who is willing to study and not afraid of manual labor, I have made a good education possible.

"That is the most that can be done. Putting the right persons in the right places is the best that I can do, and then they must do the rest.

"As you know, I have never felt inclined to put my money into building new institutions, thinking it best to work in other ways, or to help sustain those institutions already established. But in these last months my heart has gone out to the thousands of neglected little colored children of the South who are orphans, and who in many places have not even a county poorhouse to shelter them.

"I am thinking of establishing an orphanage in every one of the Southern states similar to the one at Chattanooga which I have recently visited. I could talk to you for hours about that brave Northern woman, Mrs. Steele, who has so nobly been giving her life to this work.

"At first persecuted, ostracized, and despised, her building erected at her own cost burned by incendiaries, she has gone unflinchingly on, until now she has won the respect and has the aid of the best society in Chattanooga.

"She has rescued hundreds of poor little orphan waifs from the chain-gang where they were put for petty offenses, and from the street where they roamed, with no bed but the sidewalk and gutter. She has clothed them, fed them, taught them, mothered them, and saved them. In all the South I can hear of but one other colored orphanage, for I find that the people for the most part are not yet ready to tax themselves for the support of 'little nigger brats.'"

I did not see Mildred until February. She had telegraphed me to meet her in New York, saying in her message that she and Ralph were about to go abroad for four years.

By this time I had thrown away my crutch and was myself again, and I hastened to meet her, as she had appointed, at our old rooms at the Fifth Avenue Hotel.

She was out when I arrived, and I watched eagerly from the window for her coming. Presently I saw her, — how vividly I recall the picture, — her hand on her husband's arm, tripping along briskly in the winter air, the roses in her cheeks, her tall, slight figure clad in a trim suit of dark green, her head surmounted by a soft toque of the same color, trimmed with rich green holly-leaves and red berries.

How beautiful she was! More beautiful than ever, I thought, as in glancing up she caught a glimpse of me waiting, breathless, and threw me a kiss with girlish glee. In a moment we were in each other's arms.

How tall and stalwart Ralph looked as he seized my hand in his strong grasp!

I remembered that Mildred had once likened him to a young Norse god, and I did not wonder. As for Mildred, after the first greetings were over and we had ensconced ourselves on a *tête-à-tête* for an evening's talk, I soon perceived that a certain indefinable change had come over her. I could hardly tell what it was at first.

There was a vivacity and charm and sprightliness that I had never seen before. I had always thought her charming, though perhaps a bit too reserved and dignified. Some people had thought her cold, but I knew better. Now all the latent passion and warmth of her nature had been aroused, and I saw that she had possibilities of which I had not dreamed.

"What is it, Mildred?" I asked, after Ralph had left us alone. "Somehow you seem — I scarcely know what to say — you seem so young and happy, as if" —

Mildred finished, "as if I had been drinking of the elixir of life and had become a new creature. Yes, dear," she added, "and so I have. Oh, I am so happy, so unspeakably happy!"

Then suddenly turning impulsively and throwing her arms around me, her face shining with a new light, she exclaimed, "How I wish every one else were as happy too.

"Sometimes it seems as if it were too much, as if in this sorrowful world I had no right to be so supremely happy. So often in these last months," she added musingly, "I have said to myself those lines that seemed written for me alone:

"'The face of all the world is changed, I think,
Since first I heard the footsteps of thy soul, . . .
Betwixt me and the dreadful outer brink
Of obvious death, where I, who thought to sink,
Was caught up into love and taught the whole
Of life in a new rhythm. . . .'

"Yes," continued Mildred after a little pause, and her eyes grew soft and tender, "a year ago

I thought that love would never come, and I now sometimes tremble at the thought of what I came so near missing. I do not know how, once having learned the blessedness of this love, I could have courage to live if Ralph were taken and I left. Oh," she added in a broken whisper, as for a moment she bowed her head in her hands, "if when death comes it will only mercifully take us both together." Ah me! How little we both dreamed in what way that prayer was to be answered.

Presently she raised her head and continued, while her warm arms were about me again and my head lay pillowed on her shoulder. "Ralph is so kind, so good, so tender, so unselfish! Really, at first he seemed almost sorry when I told him my secret and he learned that he had married an heiress, as if he had lost the joy of working for me. How he thanked me for keeping the secret!

"And oh, Ruby, the thought of what he is makes me so ashamed of myself," added Mildred humbly. "I have come to see how far beyond anything that I have done was his noble consecration of all his time and culture and ability to enrich the lives of those rough frontier men, while I have done nothing but sit in a velvet chair and sign cheques for money which I did not earn, and could never spend on myself."

Then, after a pause: "Well, little sister," she continued, "you do not know, and I have no words to tell you, of my happiness. I never dreamed of what I was losing in all those years before love came. I used to feel so strong and self-contained and independent, and now, it is strange enough, but I hardly know whether I have a mind of my own or not. If I have, I cannot tell what it is until I have asked Ralph;" and she laughed a happy laugh.

"Oh, Mildred, to think that I should ever live to hear you say that!" I exclaimed, laughing too. "And do you still want to vote and decline to obey? Is your haughty spirit quelled, and have" —

"Yes," said Mildred, ambiguously. "Ralph is even more of a suffragist than I, and declares that this nation has no right to call itself a republic so long as one half of the people are disfranchised. And he says the most splendid thing he ever saw a woman do was my stopping that clergyman;" and she laughed again a ringing, girlish laugh.

After a while we began to talk about Mildred's plans for the future.

"I want you to know everything, dear," she said in her frank, confiding way. "We are going away for four years, perhaps longer, for I want to study many things, and I want to see Australia before I return — that is a country with a future.

"We must go now, though I leave so much which is only begun and to which I wish to give my constant personal attention. But the mental strain this year has been great. I could not live through another like it. We both want to get far away from our responsibilities and possessions for a while. I want to gain perspective, to have time for quiet thought and study.

"This was my plan from the first, as you know, and now it is imperative. It is impossible for Ralph to write his book with the cares and distractions which we are constantly having."

"His book?" I asked; "I had not heard of that. Pray what is it about?"

"It is to treat of the colored races in our country. He has been gathering the material for a long time, and it will be an exhaustive work," she answered. Then she added, "I, too, have a little book planned, but of a very different sort."

"What! you, Mildred, an authoress!" I cried. "Shall you really write a book?"

"Oh, that is nothing nowadays, when authors are as plenty as cooks and the world is flooded with literary rubbish," answered Mildred rather disdainfully. "Any scribbler can write a book. It takes neither wit nor wisdom for that."

"Of course; but you are not a scribbler, and you won't write rubbish," I retorted. "But tell me, what is it to be about? will it be a story?"

"No," she answered. "The public does not need any more stories, at least mediocre ones, and mine could never be anything else. I trust that I have too much self-respect left to be guilty of inflicting another purposeless book on the world's already overstocked supply. Besides, you know, Howells says all the stories have been told."

"Then what is it?" I asked. "Is it sermons? or sonnets? or" —

"No," interposed Mildred; "it is *Suggestions*, — suggestions to the idle and thoughtless, the rich and the unconsciously selfish. I am confident that there are some tens of thousands of people in this country who are tolerably well-meaning, who have a superfluity of leisure and wealth and strength which they are letting run to waste because no one has suggested to them what they might do.

"Few people like to take the initiative. They wait for some one to plan and organize and tell them definitely what to do.

"My first intention is to suggest to them that they are peculiarly privileged mortals, and that life is worth living only on the condition that one does something with it. That they are sinners above all other sinners since civilization began, if they let themselves be ignorant of what they should know and indifferent to the evil which they should help; the more their culture and ability the greater their debt.

"I mean to suggest some very practical things which might be done, which need to be done. There will be suggestions for those who have time and no money, suggestions for those who have much money and no time, suggestions for people who think they have neither time nor money, and suggestions for developing influence and talent where there seems very little to start with.

"Not that these will all be particularly new or original. That is not necessary. We heedless mortals need to have a wise thing said many times and in many ways before it makes much impression.

"I shall not attempt to suggest many new principles of work, but simply to make many new applications of the old ones.

"Oh, Ruby," exclaimed Mildred, her mobile features glowing with the enthusiasm of the thought, "what a metamorphosis of this planet we little mortals might make if we all did, and did wisely, what it is quite in our power to do!"

"Such a book is a capital idea," I exclaimed, much impressed with her plan, "and it will have double weight because you have already provided the most effective object lessons as illustrations of what might be done."

"That is not exactly what I mean," replied Mildred, shaking her head. "No; few persons have it in their power to work in the way that I have done on a large scale. I am not sure after all that this is what is most needed.

"Model tenement houses and libraries are not going to save people from selfishness. There must be the tireless, personal, face-to-face and hand-to-hand work of men and women who have come to know themselves as their brothers' keepers. Institutions and paid agents can never do this work."

"But they can help enormously towards it," I replied.

"Certainly," said Mildred; "they will organize and start the work; but then it is all these people for whom I shall write my suggestions who must do the rest of the work, and they alone can make it effective.

"Now, for instance, here is a plan which Ralph and I have just been working out. It is to help save the half-grown boys and girls who night after night find their chief delight in strolling arm in arm through the streets, with smoking, and vulgar jests and silly laughter.

"You know well enough what the social dangers are to underpaid, giddy-headed girls shut up all day in shop or factory and longing for freedom and companionship.

"Night after night have Ralph and I walked up and down watching them, listening to their silly giggles and cheap talk, noting their tawdry jewelry and ribbons and frowzy bangs.

"How I pity them! I should so like to make life a little better worth living for them. Who can blame them for not wanting, after a hard day's work, to stay in their crowded, noisy homes or dreary boarding-house hall-bedrooms?

"Everywhere that we have been we have made it a practice to visit the dime museums and cheap theatres, and to study the amusements which these young people crave! Everywhere I find it the same.

"I used to know in a vague way about this night-side of things, but not until recently have I realized the awful temptations which are besetting these empty-headed girls who have no resources in themselves.

"Free lectures, or concerts, or libraries have small charm for such as they. They want to exercise, to flirt, above all to talk and laugh to their heart's content.

"The churches do not meet more than one in a hundred of such girls and not more than one in a thousand of such young men. They have no desire to spend an evening at a prayer-meeting, they would feel out of place at a church sociable, and they are too tired and unambitious to care for any classes or study.

"They want a good time; they want 'fun,' and they have no idea that it can be found among members of their own sex alone. And in this their instinct is half right.

"These young people ought to exercise and have 'fun,' and they ought to have it together.

"There are various coffee-rooms for temperate men, and various girls' club-rooms for girls alone, but, so far as I know, scarcely a respectable place in the whole city where an honest, self-respecting, poor girl can go and be able to meet honorable young men, under the protection of those who would see that her natural instincts were gratified without sacrifice of her womanhood.

"It is just such a place as this that we have decided to establish, a social club for young men and women, where they may laugh and talk to their heart's content and have plenty of innocent fun."

"And fall in love with each other?" I inquired.

"Certainly," was the reply. "Why not? Does not all experience show it to be impossible to purify society by breaking natural instincts or ignoring them? Oh, my dear," continued Mildred earnestly, "the pure love of man and woman should be the most blessed thing in life, and I who know the joy of this love would gladly keep these brothers and sisters of mine from letting it be trodden in the mire, or on the other hand slip forever out of their lives."

"But how can this be done?" I questioned skeptically. "By simply substituting for the sidewalk a room in which to giggle and flirt?"

"Listen," said Mildred. "We shall not begin by building until the experiment is assured, but we have already hired ten places in different parts of the city, where, with the help of the 'King's Daughters' and the young people of the Society for Christian Endeavor, we shall begin this work.

"The first thing we did was to engage a kind-hearted, middle-aged married woman to be the responsible head of each social club. She is to see that pleasant pictures are hung upon the walls, that potted plants are put into the windows, and everything made homelike and cosy and in good taste.

"There are to be no printed rules and mottoes hung around the wall, as if it were an institution and we were trying to do the people good. They would be suspicious of anything of that sort."

"How many rooms have you in each place?" I asked.

"Oh, that varies," answered Mildred. "In most of them there is a small hall with waxed floor and piano to be used for dancing or singing classes or debating clubs. There is another room for gymnastics, with apparatus and a piano, where a competent person will direct, and gradually insinuate various sensible ideas in regard to high heels, tight-lacing and a bad carriage, and try to make physical culture seem a desirable thing.

"There will be another room for quiet games like checkers and dominoes, several bathrooms, and a parlor where the girls can bring their fancy work and receive their friends."

"But, Mildred," I cried in alarm, "you will get a perfect mob, if you are not careful. They will bang your piano to pieces, they will have rude kissing games, the girls will waltz with men whom they never saw before; and then, if you make rules and don't let them have their own way, they won't come. I know the kind of people whom you want to help, and they are the most independent creatures living."

"Ah, but wait a minute," replied Mildred calmly. "The 'mob' are not to be invited to pour in from the street. Each one must apply for a membership ticket, give name and address, and wait a few days before it is granted. There may be, perhaps, a slight nominal fee. They will appreciate it more to have this little formality about it. Moreover, the lady who is at the head of the club, and who will be a person of character and tact, will have authority to exclude any unruly member. Nothing will be said about rules. They will be received as if they were of course expected to behave well.

"Five or six of the 'King's Daughters' have agreed to be in attendance every night, with as many gentlemen who are their escorts. They will play for dancing and gymnastics whenever it is needed. They will act as daughters of a host and receive and introduce their guests. They will join in the singing and the games and the conversation, and, with the gentlemen whom they bring, will, I think, be far more effectual in encouraging good manners than any number of rules.

"Now that everything has been planned and the wherewithal provided, I have had no difficulty in getting some hundreds of agreeable, well-bred young ladies from the different churches who have each pledged themselves to bring some gentleman to assist them and to give one evening a week faithfully to the social club.

"It is distinctly understood that there is to be no authority exercised by them, no patronizing tolerated, and charity, and that other odious word philanthropy, not so much as thought of.

"All are to meet on the same footing, simply as young people who are met to have a good time in an orderly, pleasant way.

"At first there will doubtless be hoidenish manners, a good deal of simpering and whispering and flat talk, which of course must be ignored. But by and by the presence of ten refined, Christian young gentlemen and ladies with tact and quick wit will make itself felt. There will be charades and word games like twenty questions, and a hundred such merry ways of passing the time, of which these girls have never dreamed. They will go home with new ideas about dress and manners and ways of having a good time. The veriest boor, who may begin by tipping back in his chair and picking his teeth, will not fail to observe finally that if he wishes to retain the respect of his 'best girl' his manners must conform a little more to those of that young law student who spent half an hour the other night showing her how to play parchesi, and then helped her on with her waterproof, put up her umbrella for her, and bowed her a pleasant good evening.

"I assure you," continued Mildred, "I have made the discovery that the best way to turn a silly little chit into a self-respecting woman is for a gentleman to treat her as if she were one. And the best way to make a stupid clown appear at his best is for a young lady of tact to try to draw him out.

"But this is not all. There are endless things that such a club might do.

"I hope it will develop all sorts of latent talent and mutual helpfulness, and lead the way to discussion, comparison, and emulation in a thousand ways.

"It will give each member an opportunity to make fifty acquaintances where now he or she has but one, — Protestants and Catholics, Jews and Gentiles, mechanics, factory operatives, shop-girls, bookkeepers, young professional men, teachers, millionaires' daughters, all meeting on the simple ground of their youth and American citizenship, and giving each other the pleasure of their company, the benefit of their experience. And the rich will find that they get even more than they give."

"But, after all," I urged, "can you make oil and water mix? Is this a feasible scheme?"

"That is to say," answered Mildred, "can people of different social rank, education, and employments meet socially with mutual profit and pleasure? That, I am convinced, depends entirely upon the tact and spirit of genuine friendliness which is exercised by those of the higher rank.

"Anything that is done perfunctorily is sure to fail, but genuine interest will create genuine interest. It all depends, you see, upon my helpers. Without them my money can do nothing. I can only organize; they must execute. But I am convinced that it is an experiment worth trying."

"So you are contemplating a social revolution," said I, as Mildred paused, her cheeks glowing with the excitement of the thought. "Well, sister mine, if ever one is brought about, I think it will be by your way of doing, by trying to put the right people in the right place. After all, I suppose this one little scheme of yours and Ralph's, that may help to start thousands of lives in a different direction, probably costs no more to permanently endow than what some families would pay for diamonds and horses and yachts for themselves alone."

"By the way, Ruby," asked Mildred the next day, as we sat sipping our after-dinner coffee, while Ralph had gone out to see some lawyers, "do you remember the first time I saw you, a little more than a year ago, at aunt Madison's?"

"Remember? I wonder if I shall ever forget it, or what you said to those three rich good-for-nothing" —

"No," broke in Mildred, "not 'good-for-nothing,' though I fear I thought them so at the time. I fancy I must have spoken pretty savagely, did n't I?" Then, without waiting for an answer, she continued: "I felt sure, as I thought it over afterwards, that they would hate me, that is, if they took the trouble to think about me at all. But, do you know, I think it really startled them into asking themselves some pretty plain questions.

"It set them to thinking, and" — she continued with a laugh — "I verily believe that I was in a measure the humble means of grace which brought two of them to conviction of sin and led to their conversion.

"Let me read to you part of a letter which cousin Will received and which he forwarded to me," said she, drawing an envelope from her pocket. "It is from Ned Conro, the one with the blond mustache, you remember.

"He says,—let me see,"—and she glanced down the first page, and, turning the leaf, read aloud:—

"I began for the first time to do a little thinking that last six months at Cambridge.

"Somehow that cousin of yours had said something, that night I was at your house, which kept running through my head and bothered me every now and then. I began to wonder if I were n't about as useless a lot as a fellow with two millions in his own right and a prospective Harvard sheepskin ever gets to be.

"I had shirked all the work that I dared to. I divided my time, as you know, pretty evenly between the Boston Theatre and Young's Hotel. I had no incentive to work, and did not propose to follow in your steps and study a profession. I planned after I left college to go abroad for some years. I had some vague notion of a trip to India and tiger-hunting. At all events I meant to have good sport and plenty of it too.

"The last thing I thought of was giving up any fun to stay at home and play the home missionary. But every time I had settled the matter completely in my own mind, those stinging words of that girl would come back and make my ears tingle:—

"'Oh, the last thing that you ever dream of is that you have a debt to pay and are basely repudiating it.'

"I had thought that all poppycock when she said it, but when she got her money and set to work practicing what she had preached, giving not only her money but her whole time with her money, that just stumped me.

"One day I took up a New York paper giving an account of her great library scheme. 'There,' said I, 'Miss Brewster has done what no man I ever heard of would have thought of doing.'

"A man, now, would have put up a stunning ten-million-dollar library, with his name in gilt letters on the front of it. He would put half of the money into the building and half of the remainder into rare books which no one would look at once a year. It would be a grand thing, no doubt, but how many people would it reach compared with those whom Miss Brewster's little libraries will stimulate and help?

"Why, a library can change the future of a whole community! I tell you, Miss Brewster has found where to sow her seed so that it will bring forth a hundredfold.

"I wondered what *I* could do. I could throw away my money easily enough, endow another chair at Harvard, erect another statue to some one, build a hospital; but, after all, what was *I* to do, provided that I did anything?

"Well, one day — it was Thursday afternoon — Mather said, 'Conro, let 's go into chapel and hear Brooks.' So we went. I had n't been inside the place for months. My set, you know, did n't go in for that sort of thing much.

"Somehow, something Brooks said that afternoon stirred me up all over again and set me to thinking. Mather and I did n't say anything as we came out, but I knew he too was thinking.

"We started off on a walk, and after a while, as we tramped along down past old John Harvard's statue and on past the gymnasium, he threw back his head and, clapping me on the shoulder, burst out, 'I say, old fellow, that man is a brick!'

"We turned down Craigie Street and sauntered on. Presently John Fiske turned the corner and nodded in a jolly way over his glasses at us. 'Did you know, Conro,' asked Mather, after we had passed out of hearing, 'that Fiske could read fifteen languages, and knew no end of history and everything else, and had made his mark, before he was as old as we are by some years?'

"I did n't know it, but I had n't time to say so before I looked up and saw just in front of us the gray beard and brown eyes of the man whom I, for one, think to be the greatest poet America has ever had.

"I had just got hold of Lowell last winter. Those lines of his which Miss Brewster quoted to us had set me to looking him up, and I was amazed to see how little I had known of his power.

"Well, whether it was Miss Brewster, or Phillips Brooks, or these men, the two best writers of

English on the continent, and the thought of what they had made their lives mean in the world of ideas, I don't know, but suddenly it all came over me, the thought of earnest lives that stood for something, and my own confounded folly, and I broke out for the first time: 'I say, Mather, if a fellow has been a deuced fool for the first twenty-two years of his life, what is he likely to be at the end of the next twenty-two?'

"Mather evidently did n't think that was a question which required an answer, and we tramped along together in silence for a while longer. Then he began, 'Conro, did n't what Brooks said to-day make you think of that night last winter when that black-eyed girl over there at Louisburg Square just laid us fellows out?

"'Gracious! how she did seem to take it all to heart, as if we had committed the unpardonable sin, as Gordon said. Whew! — did n't it make him mad, though? — but — well — somehow I don't know but she was more than half right after all.

"'Some things she said have been running through my head lately: "Never a time or place where heart and brains and hands could find such work to do and reap such far-reaching results. . . . Everything has been done for us, to be sure, but we can't be expected to go out of our way to see that it is passed along."'

"Well, Madison, that was the beginning of it all; and then we talked, and the long and short of it is, that Mather and I did n't take long in coming to the conclusion that if a fellow ever proposed to make anything of himself, twenty-two or three was n't any too early to begin to think about it. We mulled over it a while, until finally we struck on a scheme.

"Mather's mother had come from the South, and he had some far-away cousins there who had been the hottest kind of rebs. Perhaps that was what suggested it to us; but at any rate we are in for it now, and have given each other our word of honor to stick to it for three years at least, and then — well, we shall see.

"I had two millions and he eight hundred thousand. I have no family, you know, and he has only married brothers and sisters; so we are free on that score; and we have decided to put half of our fortunes into buying up enough stock in a lot of Southern papers to give us practical control of the country papers over a large area down here."

"He writes from some little town in Alabama," said Mildred in parenthesis. Then she continued:

"We have brought with us five or six bright Harvard boys whom we know, and whom we are going to work in as editors of dailies in strategic places. Each fellow will also have general supervision of a dozen small weekly papers scattered through the states here.

"These papers form almost the sole outlook upon the world's affairs which the people down here ever get, and, with the exception of the locals with which they are padded, are about as useful as Rollins' Ancient History.

"Mather and I are hard at work studying local history and politics and prejudices, and are planning some of the tallest kinds of innovations. We have n't shown our hand yet, of course, and it is generally understood that we are here to invest in land.

"Of course we shan't make a cent out of it all — too many niggers, and the whites are frightfully poor — can't pay for and don't want anything better than they have; but, by Jove, if I don't succeed in shaking up some of these consummate old Bourbons down here by the end of the next three years, then my name is n't Edwin G. Conro! — that 's all. However, they are n't all such a bad lot."

"Well," said Mildred, as she skimmed through the last page in silence and slowly returned the letter to the envelope, "whether these aspiring youths succeed in bringing the millennium down there by the time they are twenty-five remains to be seen, but at all events they will learn some things Harvard College has not yet taught them, and whether they help those people much or not they have taken the first step to save themselves."

CHAPTER XVI.

"MILDRED BREWSTER EVERETT, do you mean to say that you, a woman worth your tens of millions, are going to come down to living again in a brick block with little narrow rooms? Are you going to give up the splendid library, the gallery of rare paintings, the grand music-room, the conservatories and stables, and all the lovely things that you had planned?"

Mildred dropped her wax and seal, and turned from her writing-desk with a gesture of mock despair, as I continued, somewhat vehemently and without pausing for a reply: —

"Have you forgotten all those magnificent halls, those terra-cottas and mosaic floors and glorious painted windows? Think of the many times that we have planned it all out, the baronial fireplaces with the spreading elk antlers overhead, and the big tiger-skin rugs; and then the cosy, cushioned window-seats and quaintly carved lattices, the great organ with golden pipes, and the high, wind-swept turrets with winding stairs!

"Last spring you were planning to bring all this about when the tenement houses and more necessary things should be under way, and now," I continued crossly, "to think of your fancying that you are too poor to build a beautiful house for yourself, when you have money enough to buy houses for every one else!"

I think that Mildred had a passion for noble architecture. Her keen eyes would detect beauties or incongruities where my untrained sight perceived nothing.

"If a man writes a bad poem, I am not compelled to read it; if he paints a bad picture, I need not see it more than once," she was wont to say; "but if he erects an ugly building in my city he hurts me every time I walk the street, and I am helpless."

"When constructive beauty costs no more than this fantastic ugliness, why must such an absurdity be inflicted upon a long-suffering public?" she once asked in despair, as we were contemplating an expensive monument to architectural stupidity. And she never tempered her scorn when railing at the angular, parti-colored houses, run mad in the direction of ostentatious eccentricities, which are fast displacing the simple white dwellings with green blinds that, as she once declared, "at least have the merit of being modest and wholesome, and do not outrage all one's sense of the fitness of things."

"Wait until I build my house; then you shall see," she would exclaim, with a decided little nod which carried the conviction, to one listener at least, that she would some time show what money and brains combined could do towards creating an ideal home.

Many an hour, when driving about together, we had amused ourselves, in the intervals of serious work, in planning the charming mansion which she would build, and she had entered into it all with great zest.

"My idea of a house," she had said, "is to have it even more beautiful without than within, so that every line may be a positive delight to the many who can never look within its doors. Think what a boon to the thousands who never step inside a church are those Back Bay towers and steeples which I used to see from my attic window on the hill.

"A poor man has no money for a concert of good music; he has no time for a visit to an art museum to see a good picture or statue, or to go to a library to read a great poem; but in sunlight and in moonlight, seven days in the week, as he looks from his window or passes to his work, the beauty wrought in stone is his; it costs him neither time nor money, and consciously or unconsciously it appeals to him. His life is larger and richer for it.

"A walk across the Public Garden on a winter afternoon, with that campanile and the spires near it looming large and dark against the crimson glow in the west, has made me fresh and strong after many a tired day," she used to say.

So it was settled that when the walls of the House Beautiful should be reared, the first thought should be, not for its inmates, but for the countless unknown passers-by.

Then the next requirement was that it should have ample room for the many guests whom its hospitable mistress would always have around her. There was to be air and sunshine everywhere, and nothing too fine for constant use.

Unlike most women, Mildred had little fancy for beauty of the fragile sort. Exquisitely painted sèvres which a careless touch might shiver to atoms; cobweb lace that had cost the eyesight and health of other women; tapestry which had swallowed up years of another's life, only to be inferior to a painting, and become food for moths,—all this she obstinately refused to have.

"I want beautiful things about me," she said; "but beauty that is so perishable as to be a constant care to the owner, or else to entail an army of servants, is a luxury which I think no rational being can afford. I shall have everything rich and strong and yet simple; there shall be no satin, gilded-legged chairs, no elaborate dust-catching carvings; no draperies and carpets that cannot bear the sun; but there shall be noble statues, pictures by great masters, luxurious rugs and divans, glorious color from jewelled windows and precious, many-hued marbles. I do not want a palace with dreary suites of high-studded rooms and frescoed ceilings, and I do not want a house that is nothing but a crowded museum of bric-à-brac, like so many I see. No; my house shall be a stately mansion with far-seeing towers and turrets, with cosy, low-studded rooms and wainscoted walls, with pillared arcades and richly carved stone balconies. All Spain and Venice and Nuremberg shall be studied for hints of beauty, and it shall be a home, a perfectly ideal American home; beautiful without and within; built to stand while generations come and go, graced by children, pets, and flowers, and the charming society of noble men and women."

Where this home was to be built had not yet been decided. Sometimes Mildred would in imagination place it on some smooth, green slope on the banks of the Hudson; sometimes among the elms on some hilltop overlooking the golden dome on Beacon Hill, with a glimpse of blue sea and white sails on the far horizon beyond.

Of course I was to have the fun of helping to plan about it all, and Mildred was to bring home hosts of treasures from Europe after her sojourn abroad. But now, this morning, all this dream of the beauty that was to be had been ended by what Mildred had been saying.

"I have settled one hundred thousand dollars on Ralph," she had said, "for his own personal use. He would not accept any more, and I have decided to set apart for myself the same sum. The interest on two hundred thousand dollars ought, I think, to provide all the travel and luxuries that two reasonable mortals need; and the rest of the money which I had at first thought of spending on myself we are going to devote to several things, rather better worth doing than building a house, which not one in a hundred thousand could afford to maintain after we have gone."

"But, Mildred," I expostulated, "you have always asserted that it was right to encourage art; that it was folly to refuse to buy a picture or a jewel just because there were still starving people in existence somewhere. I have heard you say repeatedly that money thus spent gave employment to labor, encouraged art, and" —

"Yes," she interrupted, "that is true in a certain way, no doubt; but listen: I have been thinking this over a great deal of late. Suppose now that I spend half a million or so in employing a certain number of people to make and furnish a magnificent house. Grant that it is a real work of art, and will be a thing of beauty and a joy forever. My husband and a score of friends and I enjoy it; the workmen are paid; 'art is encouraged.'

"Now suppose again that, instead of erecting an expensively beautiful house for myself, I employ the same number of people to provide a beautiful building which shall be for the use, in the course of its existence, of scores of thousands whose eyes are inured to ugliness and into whose lives a bit of beauty rarely comes.

"Suppose that the spacious marble staircases, the tiles and wood carvings and painted windows, are put where they shall awaken the imagination and delight the soul of tired mothers and little children who have known nothing beyond their narrow alley and grimy chimney-pots; of girls who stand all day before a machine, or over a hot stove, and who spend their money for the bits of tawdry finery which are the nearest approach to beauty that their means can compass? Which building would encourage art the most, think you?

"Why, Ruby," said Mildred, wheeling around from her desk, while I stood opposing to her ardor a face of grim discontent; "do you fancy that I could sit in my great, palatial house, remembering the sights that I have seen this year in the one-roomed sod houses on bleak Western prairies, in the dingy, cheerless cabins of the colored people at the South, and in the vile-smelling tenements of this great city, and satisfy my soul by saying that I gave employment to the men who did this work for me?

"Could I honestly call myself in any sense a follower of Him who had not where to lay his head, and know that this wealth of beauty was kept for me and a dozen or so cultivated people who need it scarcely more than I, while a thousand beauty-loving natures were starving who might be fed by my superabundance?"

"Mildred, you are positively morbid," I exclaimed, thoroughly vexed. "To be sure, no one has a right to be selfish, to think of himself first, — but that you have not done. You planned your house in the beginning for the pleasure of others far more than for yourself. You meant to make your home a perfect retreat for all the poor artists and students and broken-down teachers that it could hold, and I say you are making a great mistake if you think that you are going to serve humanity better by building a big art museum down at the Mulberry Bend for the benefit of the rag-pickers and stevedores, than by giving the hospitality of such a home as yours would be to those to whom it would be a rest and an inspiration."

Mildred laughed heartily as I paused, and dropping upon the hassock beside me, she drew me close to her, while I prepared to renew my expostulations.

"Not so fast, my dear," she said, forestalling me. "Pray don't imagine that I am bereft of my senses, and propose to reform the slums by giving them free access to a gallery of casts from the antique. It would require a small army of policemen and scrubbing-women to preserve it in decent condition, if the rabble were admitted indiscriminately, and I do not propose to give people that form of beauty which they do not want and could not possibly appreciate."

"But you blame all the rich, who, no matter how much they may give away, still reserve enough to buy steam yachts and build fine houses and indulge their æsthetic tastes to the extent of one thirtieth of their fortune," I said pettishly.

"No," said Mildred, slowly; "I do not blame them. I am not their judge. I cannot speak for others: it is right, more than that, it is necessary, that man should create beauty, for he cannot live by bread alone.

"But I cannot help feeling that the beauty should be for all; should be where all may see and enjoy it. The old Greeks were right about that, when the temples, the agora, the gymnasia were consecrated to beauty, and it was the glory of the rich to minister to the state and not spend lavish sums in collecting private treasures.

"No, dear. Once I thought to have all that was rich and fine, and that could delight the eye, around me in my own home. I felt that I had a right to it, provided that I thought of others first and most. But now I see things differently. I wonder that I ever could have been so selfish.

"Yes, Ruby," she added, almost sternly, as she saw my look of protest, "it was selfishness. I meant, in spite of all my giving, to sacrifice nothing. But I have been trying these last few months, — yes, since that time last summer when my power to make life better for others seemed about to be forever taken from me, — I have been trying, and Ralph has helped me, oh, so much, to look at all this short life of ours in its beginning here on this little planet, as I shall look back upon it with the eyes of eternity, when it has all gone into the irrevocable past. How will it seem then, little sister, when all our foolish ambitions and traditions and false social standards have been swept away? Shall I be glad or sorry then, do you think, to remember that the one talent which was placed in my hands was used to its utmost, that nothing was withheld but what was needed to make me the better fitted for my work? Ah, when my naked soul shall stand before the judgment bar of its own conscience and the moral law, and hears the sentence, 'This ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone,' what shall I plead in excuse?"

Mildred's voice had sunk almost to a whisper, and her eyes were filled with unshed tears. We did not speak for a few moments. I felt a lump rising in my throat and could only choke it down while I stroked the dear head that lay warm against my arm. My foolish questionings were stilled. The clear insight of this simple, true-hearted woman had pierced through and through my flimsy protests, and I sat awed and abashed. Presently she went on in her natural, common-sense way to explain more definitely what she meant.

"I mean to make a little more beauty in this world, if I can," she said, "and accomplish some more important things as well; but the art of all arts which I shall try to learn and teach is the one which we Americans most need to study, the art of simple living.

"I shall have the pictures and the books, the statues and the music that I love; but what matters it whether they are all in my own home or not, or whether or not I seek them in galleries open to all alike? Not until our glaring, stony streets are made less dreary by more trees and fountains and statues, not until there is a little beauty for every one, can I claim the moral right to spend a fortune on Meissoniers or ancient Satsuma, for my own private delight.

"For a long time I have been thinking of what could bring the greatest stimulus and joy into the lives of the wretched poor in our great city; the washerwomen and truckmen and foul-mouthed, dirty little street *gamins* whose highest bliss is reached with the attainment of a full stomach and the sight of a street fight or a circus procession. It would be folly to give them money outright; but here in amusements, just as I have found it in regard to tenement houses and everything else, coöperation is the key to success.

"The gift of a Peabody Museum or a Hemenway Gymnasium does not offend the pride or help to pauperize the Harvard student, nor do the Lowell lectures make the most cultivated people of Boston count themselves recipients of charity when they crowd the hall to hear Professor Morse talk about Japanese pottery, or the Englishman Haweis discourse on music. Money given like that, in a large way, in the enjoyment of which all unite, never does the harm that the gift to the individual would surely do.

"Now, I propose to set up a counter-attraction to the delights of the saloon and the dance-hall and the street; and I shall put it right where it is most needed. There shall be one substantial, clean, beautiful building, a beacon light of beauty and delight in a square mile of dinginess and discomfort.

"It shall be of brick, and I shall enjoin upon my architect to show what beautiful lines and arches can be wrought in simple material. In a street of ugly straight lines and right angles, this shall stand as an object-lesson in the power of creating perpetual pleasure to the eye by such simple devices as the substitution of the curve for the straight line over door and window.

"Then within there shall be a dozen immense rooms connected by folding-doors, with sand heaps and swings and blocks for the delight of the gutter child, too old to be in the cradle and too young to be in school. From morning until night, if he behaves himself, he shall be sheltered and warm and happy under the charge of some good woman. At night these rooms shall be filled with older boys and girls learning the use of tools, sawing, planing, hammering, and finding it better fun to vent their energies in manufacturing something which they can take home for their own use than in playing tag around the ash-barrels on the corner."

"What, would you have boys and girls together?" I asked.

"Certainly," said Mildred; "they would be together on the street, and why not here?"

"But what is the use of a girl learning carpentering?" I asked. "I should think she might much better learn sewing. Besides, girls can't do it, and I don't believe they would like to, if they could."

"In regard to that, you don't know those girls so well as I do. They will sit by a smoky lamp in a close room and grow round-shouldered and near-sighted in crocheting edging and working blue cats on cardboard; but as to plain sewing, they think it a bore. After a day at school or in the shop they don't want to sit demurely on a bench and 'backstitch' and sew 'over and over.' Then, too, a course in carpentry would do more for them physically than a course at the gymnasium. There is no danger that city girls will not walk enough at all times; what they lack is development of arms and chest. Moreover, this is not an experiment. I once visited a summer class in carpentering for girls at the Tennyson Street school in Boston, and I can assure you I have n't forgotten the neat book-racks and little tables those girls of fourteen were making for themselves, nor the good time they were having in doing it, either. Such muscle as they were developing! However, there can be cooking classes and sewing classes too, if they want them, though my House Beautiful is not to be primarily a manual training school. The city may provide that for the child; but I want to do what it cannot do, and that is to give innocent amusement and a bit of beauty to lives that know nothing of it.

"So above these rooms is to be a great auditorium arranged like an amphitheatre, and capable of seating comfortably three thousand people. There shall be no cushions, and no need of them, for every seat shall be planned with reference to the human figure, and will require no padding to insure absolute comfort.

"There shall be a golden-piped organ and 'storied windows richly dight,' not casting a 'dim religious light,' but shedding warm, rich color upon the thousand shabby coats and shawls gathered from the alleys and street corners of a Sunday afternoon. Every night in the week, and all day on Sunday, this is to be opened free to every man or woman who wants to sit in a comfortable seat, see interesting pictures, hear sweet music, and give tired nerves and body a respite from the noise and confusion of the tenement and street."

"And what do you propose to give them, — symphony concerts, or Stoddard lectures?"

"Neither," answered Mildred calmly, ignoring my attempt at sarcasm, "though you have touched my idea. I mean to give them something as nearly like it as possible.

"There shall be simple talks on every conceivable subject that could interest them which admits of illustration by the stereopticon. By the aid of great pictures thrown upon the screen they shall travel over land and sea. Then there shall be story nights, when a clear-voiced student from the school of oratory will read stories to them. Think what it would be to these men and women, half of whom cannot read or write, to whose minds the facts of history and geography have no meaning, whose knowledge of life is limited to a little village in the Old Country, a steerage passage, and the crowded slums of New York; think what it would be to them to step from the cold and dinginess without into a brilliant, beautiful hall, with warmth and light and comfort insured for one hour at least out of the twenty-four; and then to sit and listen to the charming story of Little Lord Fauntleroy, or Robinson Crusoe, or to thrilling stories of exploration and adventures.

"The story or lecture shall last no more than an hour, as their attention must be held, so that they will want to come again. Then those who have heard enough may go, if they wish, and make room for others to come in to listen to a half-hour concert. There will be no Brahm's symphonies, but there will be cornet solos of such classics as the 'Swanee River,' and 'Home! Sweet Home!' and a select orchestra of half a dozen pieces will render Strauss waltzes, airs from 'Pinafore,' and the like.

"On Sunday, all day long, there shall be services of song led by the great organ and a trained chorus. Not oratorio music, though a Handel Largo or a 'Lift Thine Eyes' might sometimes be ventured on; but simple devout church music, in which all who can may join.

"Of course no preaching would be advisable, else the priests would rapidly diminish the audience; but all the power of music shall be brought to bear to uplift and beautify these poor, pinched lives and bring a glimpse of sweetness and light into the prosaic details of their daily struggle for existence.

"The Romish church has always been wise enough to see the power of music in swaying the emotions of the masses. It is time that we learned a lesson from it."

"What shall you do with your other rooms on Sunday? Shall you let them be vacant or permit the carpentering by the boys to go on below, while their elders are hearing the music in the great hall above?"

"Neither," answered Mildred. "The rooms shall all be open, but not for work. The tables and tools will have disappeared, and settees will take their places. In one room will be perhaps a debating club of young men, discussing the last strike, and finding this a pleasanter place to meet for that purpose than the street corner or the saloon. In the next room will be a set of children clustered around a young lady who comes down from Fifth Avenue and gives her Sunday evenings regularly to telling stories to them. She is not a creature of my imagination, either, Ruby. Last week I met her at a friend's house. She came in flushed and radiant from an hour's romp with the children in the nursery. 'I believe my one talent must be story-telling,' she said, as the children appeared on the scene clamoring after her; and her mother fondly said, 'Ah, there are no stories like sister Helen's, all the children think.'

"'So,' I thought, 'that is just the girl I want. Her talent shall find a larger field for development; she shall tell stories to forty children instead of four.' I told her my plan, and she almost cried with delight. 'Oh, Mrs. Everett, do you really think that I could do any good in that way? I never dreamed of it, and I should be so glad. I 've always felt as if I wanted to do something, but mamma won't let me visit in the Charities. She says I am too young. My eyes won't admit of my reading to the blind or sewing for the poor, and I began to think there was n't anything that I could do.'

"I tell you, Ruby, I am finding every day dozens of girls like her, who are only waiting for some one to say, 'This is what you can do; here is your work; here is the place; and here are the ones who need you.' I am beginning to learn that the putting of the right person in the right place is the main thing, after all. The best thing that my money can do is to make it possible for those who can give, to find those who need just what they can give.

"I shall find not only one charming story-teller, but a score, who will meet their circles of little street Arabs week after week and month after month, and if they are half as pretty and entertaining as the girl I know, you may rest assured those youngsters will count it a privilege to come.

"Not every one will be admitted; a clean face and hands and good behavior will be the prerequisite for retaining the ticket of membership to all the classes. Then in another room will be a class of young people listening to an emergency lecture, given by some bright, young medical student, who will arouse their interest by objective illustrations, such as the bandaging of sham wounds and the resuscitating of a person supposed to be drowned.

"In still another room, perhaps, some one will be reading the newspapers aloud to a score of men who are enjoying their pipes.

"All the rooms will be filled with men, women, and children, from nine o'clock in the morning until ten at night; one set coming as another goes; and each having one hour at least, in the day of rest, which shall open to him a little larger outlook on life, and shall give him something to look forward to through the six days of drudgery.

"Of course all this will require a system and a plan; but I shall have as few officials and as few restraints as possible. A neat, white-capped woman, with her badge of authority, will, I think, be quite as efficient as a big policeman; for any unseemly behavior will result in the immediate surrender of the numbered metal check which will serve as a card of entrance; and when admission is recognized as a privilege it will be coveted.

"No one will stay away because he is too shabby to come, and no one will be made to feel that he has no right or share in it all; but every week twenty-five thousand men, women, and children shall have one or two hours of peace and happiness offered them, just because, — think of it, Ruby, — just because I did not build the House Beautiful for myself."

CHAPTER XVII.

> "And whether we shall meet again I know not,
> Therefore our everlasting farewell take."
>
> JULIUS CÆSAR.

THE days sped away all too fast, crowded full of work and talk and earnest thought. I entered eagerly into all of Mildred's plans; she always knew that she could rely on me to do that, in spite of the protestations and objections with which I generally greeted the first announcement of each new scheme. I think she rather liked my objecting, as it gave her so fine an opportunity to state her case clearly and triumph over all obstacles.

"Do be charitable and indulge my garrulous propensities a little," she would laughingly plead. "You may congratulate yourself that I was not born a man, — such a stump orator as I should have made, with all my hobbies!"

In spite of her gayety and happiness, however, I could see that the strain of attending to multitudes of things was beginning to tell, even on her apparently boundless strength. The day before the last she was with her lawyers, signing last papers, seeing that nothing was neglected, no one forgotten. In the evening there was a farewell reception for hosts of friends, at which all good-byes were said.

"I want no one but you to see me sail, Ruby dear," she said; and so the hour of her departure was not announced. They had planned, first of all, a sailing voyage to the West Indies, and thence they were to go to Spain.

"I can't bear Europe just yet," said Mildred. "I want to put letters, despatches, and newspapers even, out of reach for a few weeks; to forget immigrants, cooking schools, tenement houses, libraries, and lawyers, and all the several problems that have been besetting me these last bewilderingly busy months.

"I must get time to stop and think. I want to sail idly through purple tropic seas; to skirt the green shores of volcanic islands; I want to feel for the time being that I have banished conscience and responsibility; in fact," she added, laughing, "I want to become a pagan for a while, if I can."

"The most sensible thing that I ever heard you say," I remarked with decision. "If there ever was a girl who has earned a vacation, it is you."

They were going on the Nanepashemet, manned by Captain Roberts, a weather-beaten seaman of Marblehead, who twenty years ago had dandled the little Mildred on his knee. He now counted it the greatest honor of his life that she had not forgotten him, and that he had been invited to take this bonny bride on his plain little sailing vessel.

"Why, jest think of it, Miss," he proudly remarked to me, "she might jest as easy hev bought one of them crack steam yachts with fancy fixins, and have gone in reg'lar Vanderbilt style. But it 's jest like her, jest like her. She wa'n't never one of the kind to make a splurge. I knew when she got her money 'twould n't turn her head."

One day Ralph and I had been down to inspect the craft and attend to certain alterations in the cabin which were to be made for the accommodation of the two passengers, when the captain grew quite communicative on his favorite theme.

"I knew that little chick 'ud make something when she wa'n't no higher than that," he remarked, holding his brown, tattooed hand about three feet above the deck.

"I did n't cal'late on her turnin' out so mighty rich, of course," he continued, meditatively, leaning against the rail and evidently pleased to find an appreciative listener, "but I allus knew, by the way the little thing kep' askin' questions about everything under heaven, that she 'd got a head-piece on her that 'ud make things spin one o' these days. Full o' fun, too. She could swim like a duck, and row a boat with them little pipe-stem arms of hers, and yet — wal — she was sort o' pious-like too, and allus askin' me to tell her about my trips to the East Injies, and whether I see any women a-throwin' their babies to crocodiles and a-bowin' down to idols of wood and stone.

"'I tell you, Cap'n Roberts,' that little thing 'ud say, a-settin' there in my boat, when her ma let me take her out, — 'I tell you, when I get to be a grown-up woman I 'm goin' out there and just teach those people better.'

"'Did you ever hear about Judson?' says she. 'No,' says I; 'was he a sea-cap'n?'

"'He was a missionary,' says she, real solemn; 'a missionary; and that's what I'm going to be; and you'll take me out there in your ship, won't you, cap'n?' says she. 'And oh, I'm goin' to take a whole trunk full of story-books for all those poor little girls that have to get married and don't have any.'

"Wal, wal," he continued, as he filled his pipe, "she begun it young, 'n I war n't a mite surprised when I heerd she'd got her money and see what she was a-beginnin' to do for those nasty Italians down to the Mulberry Bend. She never forgits anybody, Millie don't. Excuse me, I s'pose I orter say Mis' Everett now. She's been a-talkin' to me about the sailors; says when we git out to sea she wants a long talk with me about 'em; wants to know what they read, and everything of that sort."

"And that is the way she proposes to turn pagan," I soliloquized.

The last day had come, and we were on board the ship. Mildred, in her long, gray ulster and bright steamer hood, paced the deck arm in arm with me, taking her last look at the bridge, the towers and spires, the bronze goddess looming up against the blue, and all the dear, familiar sights. The sky was cloudless; the soft south-wind gently swelled the white sails overhead; the sea, the fawning, treacherous sea, shone brilliantly in the golden sunlight and seemed to murmur caressingly in our ears, as if to beguile us to forget its cruel power hidden for the time under this shining mask.

We paced up and down in silence, breaking it now and then by trying to say the last words, which were so hard to speak. Ralph had kindly gone below, ostensibly to look after a hamper of fruit. There was a lump in my throat; I could not speak.

How was it that this woman, whom I had met but little more than a year ago, had come to be nearer to me than any kith or kin? Life had broadened, had grown rich, since her life had come into mine. In my little narrow routine, fashioned according to the demands of society and its conventionalities, I had never before dreamed of its possibilities.

Mildred tried to talk, but I could not answer. At last, breaking down completely, I sobbed out, "Oh, Mildred, Mildred, I *cannot* let you go. I have no one in the wide world but you. You will never, never come back."

I had meant to be brave and not to sadden these last moments by my selfish grief, but a sudden premonition of evil had taken hold of me. I was not superstitious, but I felt a convulsive clutch at my heart as I looked up into her beautiful dark eyes through the mist in my own.

"Don't be morbid, darling," said she, trying to speak cheerfully, and drawing my arm closer in her embrace. But her voice sounded to me strange and far away.

"There are few women ever blessed with such a sister as you have been to me," she said tenderly. "You alone among women have made me feel this last year that you loved me for myself, and would have loved me just the same were I the lonely teacher among my books instead of a favored, flattered, rich woman. Others have given me adulation, you have given me love. And now, dear, that you may know that I know how real a sister you have been to me, until we meet again wear this for me."

I saw the red gleam of the rare jewel in her white hand, as over my finger, held in her own warm grasp, she slipped the ruby ring, her dead sister's ring which I had always seen her wear.

I said no word of thanks. I scarcely realized what she had done. I was dumb with the misery of those moments — a death's-knell seemed sounding in my ears.

We paced on again in silence, letting the precious moments pass. Presently she said, as if in reply to the wild outburst of emotion which had passed and left me numb and speechless, "Yes, dear, it may be as you fear. Whether we meet again, God only knows. But whether it be you or I that goes first into the great wonderful Beyond, of which we have so often talked, I think we shall not be sorry, we shall not be afraid.

"'For from the things we see
We trust the things to be,
That in the paths untrod,

And the long days of God,
Our feet shall still be led,
Our hearts be comforted.'

"But life is sweet, oh, so sweet. I want to live, there is so much to do," said Mildred earnestly. Yet in a moment she added, hastily, "But what folly for me to fancy that *I* am needed to do the work.

"'Others shall sing the song,
Others shall right the wrong,
Finish what I begin,
And all I fail of, win.'"

We said no more, but still paced the deck together, looking at sea and shore and sunny sky, finding no words to tell of all that was in our hearts.

At last the signal was given, and the tug that was to carry me back to the city steamed alongside. I knew that the moment of parting had come, and, like an exile summoning all his fortitude to help him take bravely the last step across the border line which divides him from home and country, I said, calmly, "Well, dear, —

"'If we do meet again, why, we shall smile;
If not, why, then, this parting were well made.'

I felt her warm, red lips against my cheek. I heard Ralph's strong "God bless and keep you, little sister," and then, almost before I knew it, I had slipped over the vessel's side, and they were gone. I saw them wave a last adieu. I saw, as in a dream, the white-winged ship, bearing its precious freight, sail out into the dazzling east, over the dimpling sea, the shimmering, golden sea, the cruel, cruel sea.

There is no more to tell. The world knows the rest. Seven days of calm weather, and then from the coral reefs of the southern sea to the rocky headlands of the north, the storm-king raged. Madly the fierce Atlantic lashed its waves on cliff and beach and sunken ledge, sending dumb terror to the hearts that had seen their loved ones go down unto the sea in ships.

Somewhere on that wild waste of waters, whether in the chill, gray dawn or in midnight blackness, amid the lightning's flash and thunder's peal, — God only knows, — a little ship went down. And when the sharp, swift summons came, two brave hearts went forth together into the great Unseen, knowing of a surety that this, thank God, was not the end — only the end of the beginning.

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